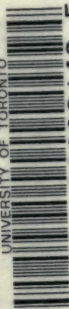


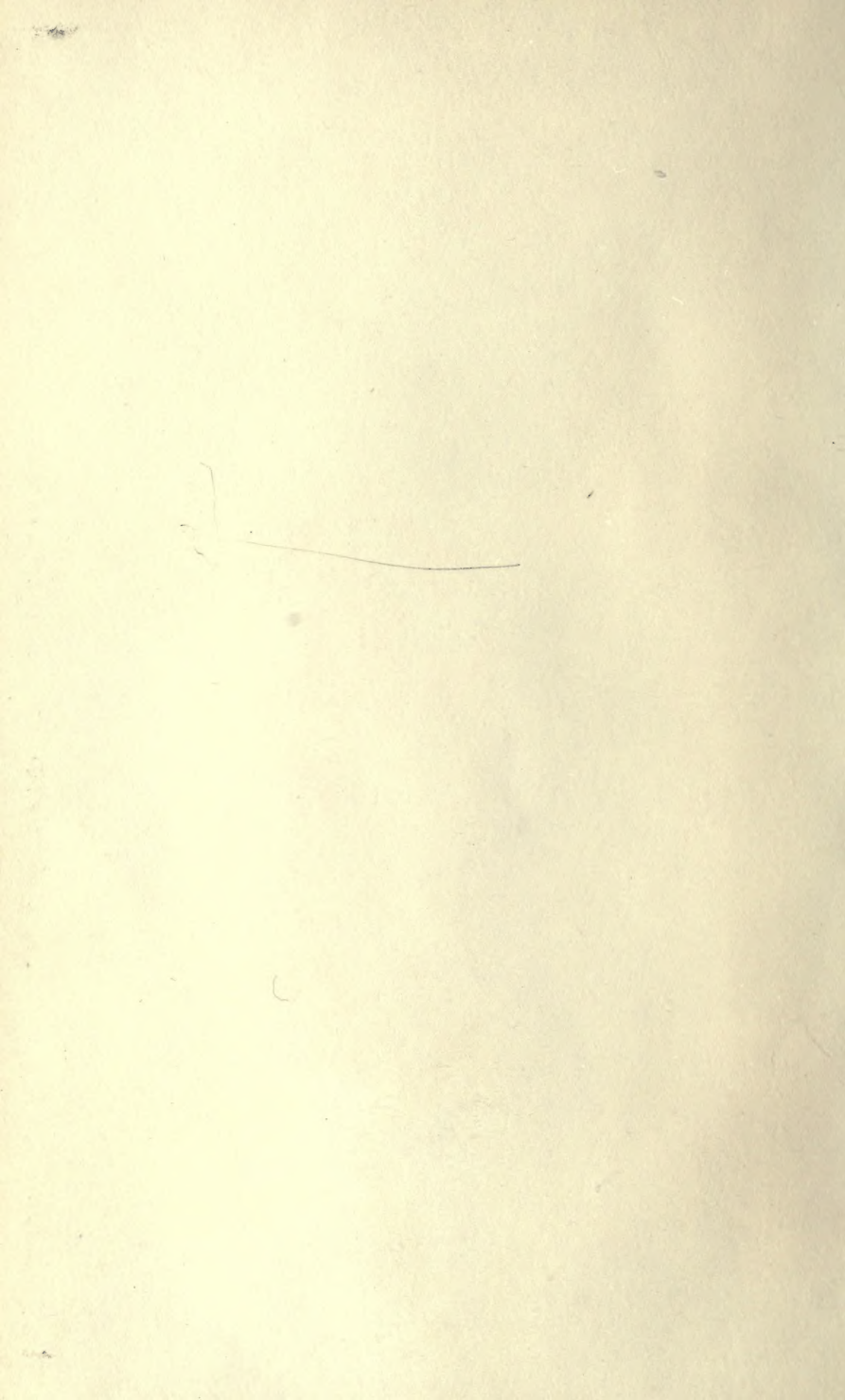
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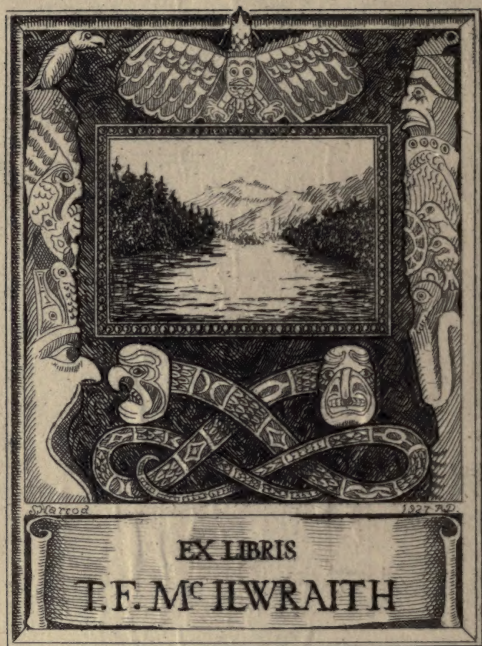


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Native Races and
Their Rulers by
C. L. Temple





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AN EMIR'S MESSENGER VISITING A PAGAN HAMLET.

NATIVE RACES AND THEIR RULERS

SKETCHES AND STUDIES
OF OFFICIAL LIFE AND
ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS
IN

NIGERIA

BY

C. L. TEMPLE, C.M.G.,

F.R.G.S., F.S.A., F.G.S.

LATE LIEUT.-GOVERNOR NORTHERN PROVINCES NIGERIA.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

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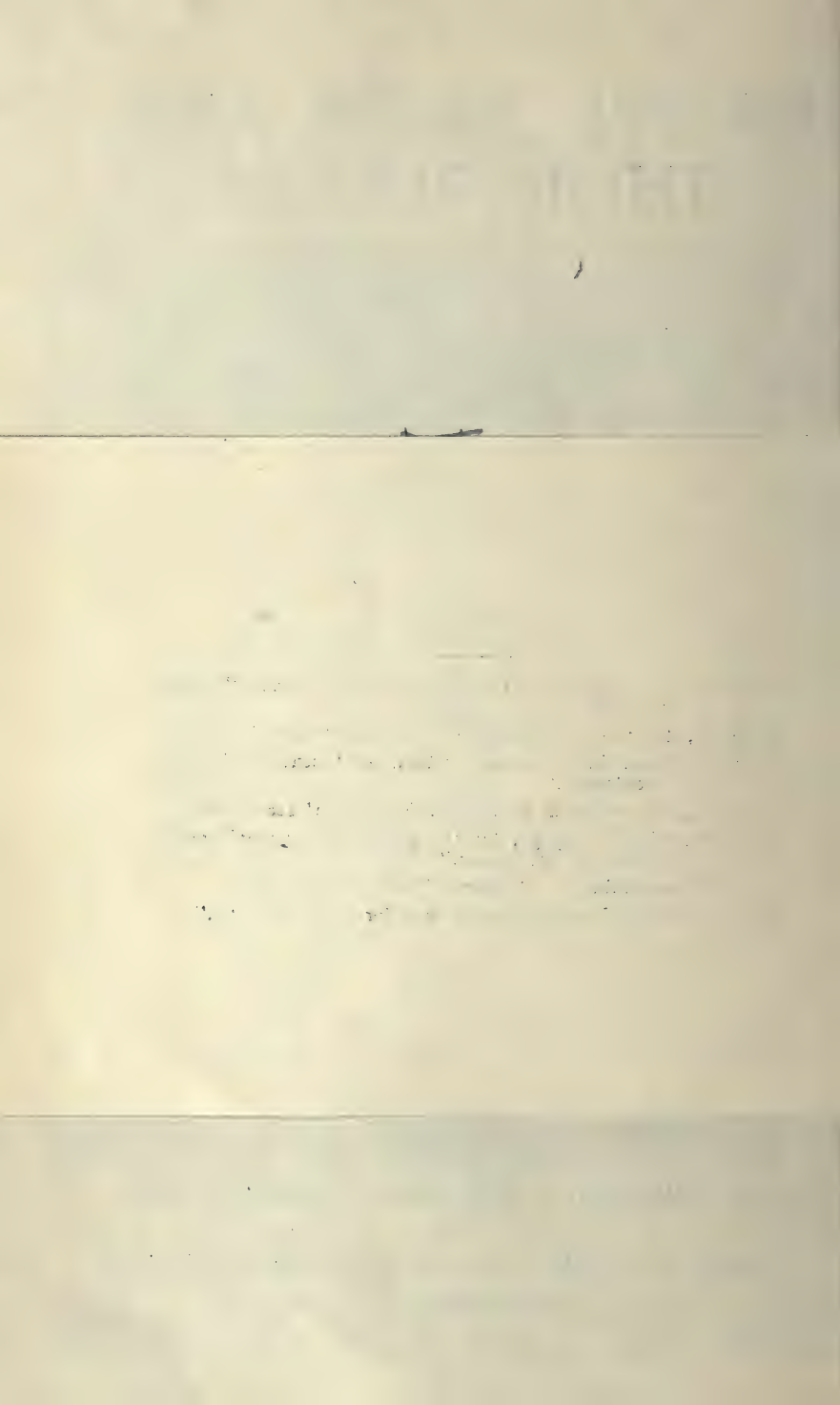
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PREFACE.

THE excuse which I have to offer for writing, and presenting to the public, this little work at such a time as the present, is the fact that ill health has compelled me to take a seat on the shelf of inaction, and so debarred me from practising rather than preaching.

I trust it may be evident that the policy of ruling native races "indirectly," which is advocated in the following pages, is recommended for application in the case of those native communities which are living in conditions, climatic or other, which preclude the entry among them of any large proportion of Europeans, and not to those where natives and Europeans are intermingled in anything like equal proportions, as in the West Indian Colonies or the Southern States of America, for instance. In the latter circumstances native problems no doubt assume very different aspects, and, having no experience of them, I do not pretend to be able to understand, far less to attempt to solve, them.

While I am not so presumptuous as to expect the reader to agree with all the conclusions arrived at, I will venture to say that the data on which they are based have been very carefully collected, and that there is a possibility, nay, even a probability, that those data, at all events, are correct.

I would further ask the reader to believe that the questions and problems discussed, such as Direct and Indirect Rule, Direct and Indirect Taxation, Land Tenure, the separation of judicial and executive functions, etc., require attention and solution. In every Colony and Protectorate containing large native populations, one or other of these problems awaits solution, and in some all. That they have remained unsolved so far without, at all events entirely, hindering progress is no argument for further indefinite postponement. The world is turning faster and faster. Not the least effect of the employment in this war of large numbers of natives, fighting shoulder to shoulder with white men, in the white men's countries, and against other white men, will inevitably be a great stride in the development, or at all events alteration, of the conception which the native mind has formed of the white man. If we gain in material prestige we shall certainly

not retain that psychical prestige which we formerly enjoyed. I mean that no native who has fought in Europe, Asia or Africa in a position of complete equality of opportunity against white men will retain that peculiar feeling of awe in the presence of a white man on which Europeans have been able to rely up to now. In short, the native, in the bulk, is going to think much more, and think much more rapidly, in the future than he has done in the past.

With regard to the Drink problem, we are, so far from progressing, slipping back into the mire. Even as I write there is a proposal to permit the Kafirs on the Rand, hitherto, for them, a dry area, to have plenty of Kafir beer. It is said that so many natives and so many whites are convicted annually for illicit purchase and sale of liquor that we are by our laws manufacturing criminals, if you please! If I may be so bold as to advise on the subject, I would say: "Let us cease from arguing the point, from reading the reports of Commissions, the proceedings of Committees, the monographs of experts, administrative and medical. In short, let us cease from futile ratiocination in this matter. Let us rather bring a little wholesome bigotry to bear on the subject. We all know that alcohol is not particularly good for anybody; that we can all do without it; that the liquor traffic has caused, is causing, and will cause (if it is not checked) individual and racial degradation and death to natives all over the world."

It is our plain duty to stop it. What are we going to do about it?

In some cases, in order to ensure accuracy, I have employed photographs in the preparation of the little sketches which appear on these pages. As some of those photographs have been given or lent by friends, I should like to be able to make acknowledgment individually. As lapse of time renders this, however, impossible, I am compelled to acknowledge them collectively.

C. L. T.

Matjesfontein,
April, 1918.

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Certain problems which may have occurred to political officers regarding the destinies of natives. Will they remain for ever as they are to-day? Why more likely to present themselves to political officers abroad than to officials at home. Latter are working in normal surroundings while former are working in abnormal surroundings.

Difference between a race living in normal conditions and one living in abnormal conditions. In normal conditions the reins of power can be seized by the ambitious. Ambitious individuals can be divided into two classes, those with social and those with anti-social instincts. Existence of ambitious individuals with social instinct necessary to welfare of races. The more readily they can get to the front the better. Ignorance the chief drawback. The ambitious with anti-social instincts tend to keep the race ignorant. Nations gradually advancing under good leaders. Government by masses a misnomer. Masses never govern themselves. Have some choice in selection of whom they will follow, but oftener rescued from bad by good leaders. European nations, especially England, under good leadership have dominated vast native populations.

As the world has grown older relative positions of conquered and conquering races have altered. The populations of both groups have become immensely larger. There is a greater divergence in their mental and physical natures. These differences accentuated by the appearance of great leaders of thought. Now so divergent that fusion of European with Asiatic and African races impossible. In the past conquering nations either mixed with or exterminated the conquered, or else the latter recovered their liberty. A race cannot continue to exist for ever in a state of suspended animation. We cannot fuse with or exterminate conquered native races. What is to happen?

Until recent times *Vae victis* was the recognised rule. Conqueror might enslave, destroy, or exploit conquered. Gradually, however,

nations recognised necessity of some moral justification. First of all conversion considered sufficient. This now abandoned in favour of the humanitarian ideal. People are to be conquered for their own good as well as for the good of the conqueror. All the weaker now conquered by the stronger. Can they always remain in a state of subjection especially in view of the trend towards the "individualistic" ideal in Europe? Should we have been content to exist under a beneficent despotism set up by William the Conqueror? Conquered native races in a similar position. Can they remain content under our rule? Yes, if we adopt a policy allowing of a return to normal conditions, affording scope for native leaders; but not otherwise.

CHAPTER III.

PONDERATION.—DIRECT *versus* INDIRECT RULE, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NIGERIAN PRACTICE - - - - - 29-47

Three systems may be adopted for control of native subject races.

Direct Rule, Indirect Rule, and a system whereby native Institutions are retained *pro tem*.

Description of the three systems :—Direct Rule is government of natives by aliens. Indirect Rule, government of natives by natives. The third system a stepping stone to Direct Rule.

Direct Rule discussed :—The case for Direct Rule is briefly that it is useless to bolster up effete institutions. Would be sound were native half-devil half-child. He is, however, an ordinary human being in a different stage of development to ourselves. Our control based on material force. As we cannot read the past we cannot fore tell the future. But we can assume native races will not remain exactly as they are to-day.

We cannot force the individualistic ideal on to races deeply imbued with the feudal ideal in a short time without causing a chaotic state of affairs. Not even by increase of European staff nor by legislation.

African natives are not all alike, their needs are not identical. They rapidly become denationalised. This would be good if we could rule directly, but we cannot.

The natives are in the feudal condition, with the bump of veneration developed to a great degree, even in the case of pagan communities. This is their sheet anchor, and if we remove it we produce chaos, as we have nothing to replace it. The absence of economic stress renders retention of feudal system necessary.

Authority of head of house basis of feudal system. European staff cannot establish the authority of head of house. Shortage of staff not always an evil.

A note regarding the cost of European staff in West Africa.

Reasons why legislation no panacea for administrative evils. Limitation of control by laws. Difficulty of suppressing customs harmful to

natives when such are countenanced at home, being harmless to Europeans.

Deterioration of native races in contact with European civilisation. Such deterioration not only avoidable but must be avoided, especially in case of Africa. Extraordinary vitality of African native, his endurance, powers of memory. Weak points in African character which have brought him under foreign domination. Lack of honesty, lack of mental initiative, in spite of great powers of imitation.

Deterioration can be avoided if native institutions supported. Native institutions outcome of real needs, have preserved existence of native races. Native customs must sometimes be interfered with as repugnant, but even so, not necessarily so barbarous as might at first appear. Mutilation rarely practised, as theft almost unknown. Trial by ordeal, or throwing persons to crocodiles, probably forms of execution. Some customs formerly practised in Europe are repugnant to modern ideas.

Indirect Rule successfully practised in Northern Provinces, Nigeria.

The system by which native institutions are to be supported *pro tem*. discussed. A stepping stone to Direct Rule. This system places natives of all classes and the European executive officers in difficult position; liable to result in chaos.

The position of the Emir before his country was occupied, difficult and responsible; may be rendered impossible now, but full of possibilities if Indirect Rule adopted.

When no policy laid down by Government, natives ruled under various policies with chaotic results. Shortness of tour in West Africa complicates matters. Calamities sometimes only just avoided.

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Definition of Indirect Rule. Reasonable enough in theory. Difficulties in practice. Necessity of tolerating practices in some cases reprehensible to our ideas, but such practices tolerated in England in Middle Ages and by the Greeks.

If difficult for officials on the spot to tolerate such practices, more difficult for authorities at home. Nevertheless patience must be exerted.

If patience exerted native will evolve a civilisation of his own, good, but not necessarily exactly like that of Europe. Danger of causing native to despise his own institutions, thus taking from him what he has, while we have little or nothing to offer in return. On the contrary we may place him at a great disadvantage. We have often damaged native races despite good intentions.

Impossible natives share our social life. Main difficulty intermarriage with coloured individuals. Illegality of such unions in South Africa.

Natives unable to advance in civilisation on European lines even if left to themselves.

Independence of native communities may not be desired, but their government on European lines only. Reasons why this impossible. Centralisation of administration of native subject races. Influence of House of Commons in preserving this. How it operates creating a tendency to strive after over-efficiency. In order avoid possibility of their making a mistake we deprive Residents of all power of initiative. This tendency aggravated by Direct Rule reduced by Indirect Rule. Public opinion more tolerant towards native rulers. This outcome of a wise instinct.

Educated natives can, to a limited extent, be employed in subordinate or even fairly responsible Government posts, but they will be quite as much aliens as the European himself. In any case extent of such employment very restricted, and educated native could only be so employed in his own country. Impossibility in practice of giving large powers to natives under system of Direct Rule. But under Indirect Rule they can be so entrusted. Hygienic considerations render it difficult African and European work side by side.

The native cannot be ruled by a white man at all, he can be "bossed about" only. This harmful to both. Freedom from all control not good for native.

Native institutions have proved their value in the past. Two tests of value of an institution. Is it effective? Is it capable of modification?

The fact that abuses have occurred no proof worthlessness institution. Abuses have occurred under European institutions. Where there is no strong native administration there is very little administration at all.

European institutions can be modified only in accordance with needs Europeans not in accordance with needs natives. Difficulty of suppressing gambling games and consumption alcohol, harmful to natives, because not harmful to Europeans. Persons who cannot avoid arguing from European precedents unsuited deal with native affairs.

Arguments in favour Indirect Rule apply to less developed as well as to considerably developed native communities. Probably no community exists without an organisation. Without any organisation the race dies out. Certain customs prove existence of powerful organisations even among primitive races.

An outline of the duties of a Resident. Resident held responsible for affairs generally. Is called upon for explanation of any *contre-temps*. Rightly so held as he only conveys orders to natives. Means by which his work may be hampered. Lack of recognised

policy. Over centralisation causes excessive delays and loss of prestige. Limits between which Headquarters can assist Resident.

Description work of Resident in advanced native community. Description of such community. The machinery of a small Government already exists. Emirs, District and Village Heads, Native Courts of Justice, Native Police, Native Revenue. All this machinery controlled by Emir whose adviser is the Resident. Resident is President of Provincial Courts. Necessity for executive officers to hold judicial powers. Resident's influence and power enormous, nevertheless must be given a free hand and helped, not interfered with. Should not be called upon to give why and wherefore for every act. Should be judged by results. Reference *pro forma* to Headquarters mischievous. Damages influence of Resident. More important still weakens influence of Emir.

Description of Emir's position before occupation by Foreign Power. How restrained by public opinion to a certain extent. Native populations often well ruled, though weak tribes harried and enslaved. Native communities were evolving a civilisation before our arrival. Position of Emir now changed. No longer restrained by public opinion. Resident takes the place of latter. Main object to be kept in view by Resident is to cause the natives to be ruled well but on native lines. He must keep his influence in the background. At the same time must be well informed at first-hand. Must be accessible to natives and yet not diminish authority and prestige of Emir and Native Administration. His difficulties greatly enhanced by jealous dispositions of Emirs and Chiefs and by tendency of natives to bring frivolous complaints or to suffer oppression without complaint. Resident must not strive to become popular hero or to wear turban of Emir. Must secure respect and confidence of all classes.

Necessary a Resident be naturally sympathetic towards natives. Chief qualification necessary is sense of proportion. Must be able to judge comparative urgency of reforms and what reforms altogether impracticable. Must be able to judge where patience should be exerted or prompt punitive action taken. Must be able to judge how and through which individuals he can best exert his influence. Must conserve his own force.

To repeat, Resident should receive general instructions only. Should not be interfered with except in special cases. Should not be called upon to furnish written explanations for every act. Should be judged by results.

Same considerations apply to Residents in charge of less advanced communities. Once prestige of Government established he must keep himself even more in background as native authority more susceptible of damage. The influence exerted by Resident by means of Indirect Rule far surpasses that he can exert under Direct Rule.

The influence exerted by the European on native character the most important administrative asset. Surpasses in importance extension of trade and of public works, all in themselves important. Such influence can only be exerted under system Indirect Rule. It is true certain matters in Kano Emirate, for example, need improvement. Reasonable hope of improvement under Indirect Rule. No hope under Direct Rule owing to loss of all control by European Executive and resultant chaos. Native loses respect for all authority if he despises his own institutions. Even family discipline disappears.

A plea for adoption of a well-defined policy. Any policy better than none.

Certain questions regarding practical difficulties in putting into effect Indirect Rule. Native races cannot be kept in glass frames apart from world; how then are modern material improvements to be effected? Emir's staff cannot carry these out unless educated in Europe. Also what is to be done in areas where native institutions have been abolished already?

Reply to above. Certain inconsistencies have to be supported. Public works, etc., must be constructed. Inexpedient Europeans work in employ native administrations. Can, however, be lent by Government. In time it will be possible educate natives at home without their becoming denationalised. Meanwhile it may be necessary to rule directly certain small areas. This can be done without dislocation of policy if Indirect Rule heartily supported by all Departments. Native authorities to deal with certain questions can be created in those areas. Necessity for unity of action between administrative officers and heads of Technical Departments. Latter generally Direct Rulers. Cheap labour and cheap food their one desideratum. Where native institutions abolished they should be resuscitated. This quite possible to do. Many natives now employed by Government and also many unofficial natives not now filling positions in which they can do most good. Such could all be better employed if system of Indirect Rule adopted.

Regarding employment of Europeans by native administration. It is at present inexpedient that they should be so employed. White man's prestige must be maintained. If native does not respect white man he loses respect for native institutions also. The European administration can, however, lend officers to native administration. Regrettable tendency of European officers of technical departments to regard native institutions with contempt.

What is to be the upshot of Indirect Rule? What is to be future of natives thus administered? They are to manage their own affairs. This not "Little Englandism." Some native groups already capable of local self-government to considerable extent. And no reason why in course of time all native communities should not rise to state of the Self-governing Colonies.

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A SOKOTO CHIEF.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE part of the British Empire where the data on which the conclusions arrived at in the following pages were, for the most part, obtained is that known to-day as the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria. The Northern areas were known when they were first taken over by the Government from the Royal Niger Company in the year 1900, and up to the end of the year 1913, as Northern Nigeria. Now, since the amalgamation of Northern with Southern Nigeria the whole area is named Nigeria. The administration is entrusted to a Governor-General with two Lieutenant-Governors, one for the Northern and one for the Southern provinces (which form the Protectorate), while for the Colony there is one Administrator.* The Head of the Government is assisted by an Executive Council and his more important acts are performed as Governor-General-in-Council. The Protectorate

* This latter post is sometimes filled by the Lieutenant-Governor, Southern Provinces.

is divided up for administrative purposes into Provinces with a Resident in charge of each, assisted by a staff of District Commissioners. Besides these, an important part, as will be seen in the following pages, in the work of administration is played by what are termed the Native Administrations. This is more particularly the case in the Northern Provinces where each great



A BORNU CHIEF.

Muslim Filane Emirate, such as Sokoto, Kano, Katsena, Zaria, Bauchi, etc., and the Emirate of Bornu (which is not Filane), forms a petty Government of its own in many respects. In the Southern Provinces there are several important Pagan units such as the Yoruba Chieftainates of Abeokuta, Ibadan, and Oyo, which, to a certain extent, manage their own affairs, as do the Northern Emirates.

There are the usual technical Departments, some are very large, the Railways Department for instance has a thousand miles of open lines. For the most part these are responsible to the Governor-General direct through the Central Secretariat, while some of the smaller Departments are responsible to him through the Lieutenant-Governors. There is no officer corresponding to the Colonial Secretary, or the Secretary to Government, in other Colonies, but each Lieutenant-Governor and the Administrator has his own Secretariat, making four in all, including the Central Secretariat. There is a Chief Justice with a staff of Puisne judges; an Attorney-General advises the Governor-General and each Lieutenant-Governor has a Legal Adviser. I will not go closely into the details of the administrative machinery which does not differ materially from that in other Colonies and Protectorates.

There is nowhere to be found in the Empire, I think, a territory which includes, in so comparatively small an area and population, so great a diversity of climatic conditions, and ethnographical, sociological and sectarian divisions. And yet the total area of 350,000 square miles and the population just short of twenty

millions allows of each of these different areas and sections of humanity to exist on such a scale as to exhibit in a normal and natural manner the features characteristic to such conditions. Within the limits of Nigeria are to be found sections of the human race and areas of the earth's surface typical of very nearly every class of society and of every description of climate to be found in the Empire within the tropics.



A HAMLET ON THE NORTHERN PLAINS.

Taking the sociological and ethnological point of view first we have in the Emirate of Sokoto a good example of the effects of Islam at their best. The tenets of this creed appear to have appealed especially to the naturally haughty, reserved, and serious character of the Filane, a Semitic race allied to the Arabs and Jews, and at Sokoto and its neighbourhood we find in large numbers Muslims who carry out in the strictest manner the spirit as well as the letter of the Koran and the Commentaries. They belong to the Maliki sect for the most part. No acts of religious fanaticism have as yet occurred among the people, on the contrary they have been particularly law-abiding and have shown real loyalty to the Government on more than one

occasion, but it is easy to foresee that injudicious treatment might lead to such acts among people whose religion is a really governing influence in their daily lives. As might be expected the habits of these people are strictly frugal and simple—all pomp, show, and ostentation, the wearing of fine clothes of bright colours, even the building of large houses, is considered “bad form” among them. A plain white robe, and a not too clean one at that, is considered the correct dress in these parts. A man may take a pride in the strength and beauty of his horse and the temper of his sword, all other earthly considerations are vanity. So it comes about that though they are in cast of mind oriental of the orientals, the appearance of a Sokoto crowd or town or gathering of chiefs is liable to lack the colour which we have come to look for in oriental and tropical studies. Nevertheless they fit in with their surroundings, which, for their part, have nothing tropical about them. The great sandy waterless stretches which, however, bear good crops in the rains, are for the most part, devoid of incident; the vegetation is sparse and meagre, and trees scarce and not of luxuriant growth. Further, for several months of the year a strong North East desert wind sweeps over the country. This wind, known as the Harmattan, is charged with fine particles of sand which have the effect of throwing a neutral silvery veil of mist over the landscape, producing an effect not without beauty, but quite destroying all colour.



A SOKOTO CHIEF.

Leaving Sokoto and proceeding South, say to Kano, the characteristics of the people alter, there is more intermixture of negro blood, they are less austere, their bodies are less attenuated, they look much happier, what they lose in refinement they gain in vivacity and the picturesque. They wear bright clothes, admirably matching the colours; the more wealthy build large cool houses of sun-baked clay, but often of elaborate design. The arches which the native architects succeed in turning, without the help of drawings to act as a guide in the

execution of the preconceived plan, are veritable feats of simple engineering and are often of great artistic value. Nevertheless, it is evident, from their expressions, that amongst these natives,



A GATE OF KANO CITY.

as is always the case where Islam has spread to any appreciable extent, are many who take life extremely seriously. Throughout the Filane states to the South of Sokoto (and in Bornu where the climate is similar to that of Sokoto, but the Semitic blood is wanting), the general characteristics of the people are similar to those in Kano. Only as you travel South there is more rude savage display and less courtly dignity, and the people get less reserved and more open in their speech. This is sometimes taken as indicating a bolder, franker habit of mind. But such is not the case: what is really indicated is a more rudimentary mode of life, thought, and greater absence of self-control.



A FILANE BORDER CHIEF.

In all the refinements of life such as polite manners, court etiquette, hospitality, and, in general, good behaviour



A KANO CHIEF.

and constraint, even to the point of suppressing all outward show of inner feelings, the Filane Emirs of the North and all their chiefs and notables and even the more well-to-do merchants had progressed before our arrival about as far as it is possible so to do. It would be hard to surpass the manners of these people, indeed the very peasants not infrequently put one on one's mettle in matters of behaviour. Moreover, they had progressed very far in more intellectual directions, and for verbiage, niceties of language, skill in dialectics, in detecting the weak points of an argument, in making use of a technical



A SOKOTO FILANE CHIEF.

flaw to establish a weak defence, for giving an answer which appears satisfactory at the moment but will presently be found

to be no answer at all, and, in general, for concealing information and at the same time giving the listener the idea that they are conveying it, some of these men are hard to beat. Even long experience and a knowledge of the Hausa language, which they all talk, will not always save a political officer from being outwitted. Nor can it but be admitted that many possess real statecraft, courage and promptitude in action, though it is in the latter quality that they are liable to fail.

Travelling further South, leaving the area conquered before our arrival by the Filane

“VITALITY.”

and by the Kanuri from Bornu, we emerge from the plains and enter broken country. Sometimes, as in the case of the area to the North of the Benue river, we find large granite ranges with peaks 6,000ft. in height above the level of the sea. Here the natives are very different. Semitic blood is no longer evident and the type approaches rather towards that of the negro, but, as yet, they are not by any means pure negroes, but rather negroid. Probably the home of the Bantu race is to be found just to the North of the Benue on the Bauchi plateau, where natives very like the Basutos, with ponies which they ride barebacked over every kind of stony hilly ground, are to be found. These people successfully resisted the Muslim from the North finding refuge in their hills and the areas of forest which clothe the banks of the rivers and streams. For the most part they are extremely, almost absolutely, primitive, except in respect to their agriculture, which is excellent.

His body smeared with red clay, his hair matted and stiffened with grease ; a few brass ornaments at his elbows, wrists, knees and ankles ; probably a pair of iron greaves on his legs, polished like silver by the grasses as he strides along ; with a necklace of bright blue or red beads and earrings of the same ; a girdle with a knife hung on it, a quiver on his shoulder and a bow in his hand and with nothing at all resembling clothes on his body, unless it be a goatskin hung over his buttocks giving him the appearance of having a tail ; his highly developed muscles forming a series of rippling convex curves all over his burly form, a good specimen of the natives of these parts fills in reality the frame of the ideal savage of the imagination.

Travelling further South and crossing the river Benue, to the East bank of the Niger river, we pass through more Bantu tribes until we reach the denizens of the forest belt, probably the real aborigines of all the areas we have traversed who found in the impenetrable groves and swamps of this region a refuge at last from attacks from the North. These are, as



A HILL PAGAN.

might be expected, negroes of the most primitive description. As the actual coast is reached, however, trade with the European, bringing with it opportunities for acquiring cloth and ornaments, and contact with the missionaries, have raised these people very greatly in the material scale, and among them are to be found some who have advanced intellectually also, though not I fear, and as I shall try to show later, on lines which will lead them very far.

Travelling South but on the West bank of the Niger, we come to the zone inhabited by the great Yoruba speaking tribes. Whether they are one tribe or a number of tribes speaking different dialects of the same language is a point not yet decided. They are certainly not pure negro and were not the aboriginal inhabi-

tants, but where they came from is not known, except that it was from the East.*

In some cases these tribes have elaborated a form of Government not unlike that of the Filane Emirates and, to lesser degree, they have developed materially and intellectually on similar lines. In other cases they are living in the forests in the most primitive conditions.

Passing through this belt one emerges into the Colony, still termed the Colony of Lagos. Here, in and immediately round the town of Lagos, are to be found a large number of natives of the West Coast of Africa who have been long in close contact with Europeans, many of whom have been educated in England and for whom European civilisation has done as much as it can for coloured natives of Africa. Amongst these are many highly educated persons of both sexes, possessed of great abilities, not a few of the men being fully qualified practitioners of medicine and law, and others merchants in a large way of business.

From this brief resumé I think it will be seen that the administrative stage is crowded with a full and varied company representing practically all sorts and conditions of natives in large numbers.

To turn to climatic conditions. As might be expected all kinds of climates are to be found. The Northern plains are intensely dry for most of the year and seldom really damp. The



A VIEW ON THE BENUE RIVER.

* Dr. O. Johnson, B.A., M.D., a Yoruba native of Lagos, writes: "It is more likely, however, that Upper Egypt, or Nubia, was their original home. Apart from their habits and mode of thought, which are peculiarly Eastern, their manners and customs also point in the same direction. If one notices the way they wind their dead for interment and sees how exactly it is the manner Egyptian mummies are wound up the truth will impress itself on one's mind that they are of the same stock as the ancient Egyptians. We may even go further and notice the kind of cloth the mummies are bound with and we shall easily recognise in them our Sammayá clothes."

heat, towards the end of the dry season, is intense (110° F. in the shade) but for some months previously the cold desert winds are very invigorating. Leaving the plains (varying in altitude, Sokoto and Lake Chad being about 800ft., and Kano about 1,500ft. above the sea), and continuing South one enters the mountainous zone North of the Benue river. Here the climate gets somewhat cooler, until on the Bauchi Highlands (4,000 ft.) it is almost temperate, and even cold during some months of the year. Travelling further South the ground falls, the climate gets damper but cooler than the Northern plains, cooler than



A BAY NEAR LAGOS.

in some of the hilly districts even, owing to evaporation, until Lagos is reached, where the heat is never excessive and the temperature is very equable (mean about 75° F.). Owing to the quantity of moisture in the air the heat appears much greater than it is however, and is liable to cause a feeling of lassitude among Europeans. Nevertheless, experience has shown that these areas, in spite of the damp swamps and forests, are not more unhealthy than the Northern plains. The Bauchi highlands are certainly much healthier than the low lying districts, but only

relatively so. All Nigeria is very unhealthy for Europeans. No part of it can ever become a "white man's" country. For European children it is out of the question, and European women should only risk the dangers of the climate during the years when they are strongest. The sturdiest European, even though he be engaged on work which does not tie him to his desk, and is therefore much less debilitating, cannot serve for more than eighteen months, as the outside limit, in the country without weakening his constitution in a manner that will curtail his activities as he gets older to an abnormal extent: it is better that, unless his duties (as in the case of a political officer)



APPROACHING THE BAUCHI HILLS.

require him to stay longer, twelve months should be the limit of a tour of service. I know that some people have taken a contrary view, but had I space I could prove the above statements to be true from statistics. It is a most deceptive country. A traveller, or casual observer, spending a few months of the dry season in Kano, or anywhere up North, especially on the Bauchi plateau, and finding his health greatly benefited may easily draw quite a wrong conclusion. I well remember, when at the age of about thirty-one I landed at Lokoja, it appeared to me ridiculous to call that an unhealthy part of the world. Having just spent seven years in Brazil, concluding with an un-

interrupted spell of three years' residence on the Amazon, partly at Manaos and partly at Para, and knowing what the swamps and forests and rains of those parts can be and that Europeans stand them for five and ten years on end without undue strain, it appeared to me that one could stay a lifetime in the dry and bracing air of Northern Nigeria, especially as yellow fever, the bane of South America, was then unknown. I was soon to learn better, however. There is no doubt about the unhealthiness of these parts compared to other parts of the globe, which should, to all appearances, be worse but which in point of fact are better. Comparisons of temperatures, the dampness of atmosphere,

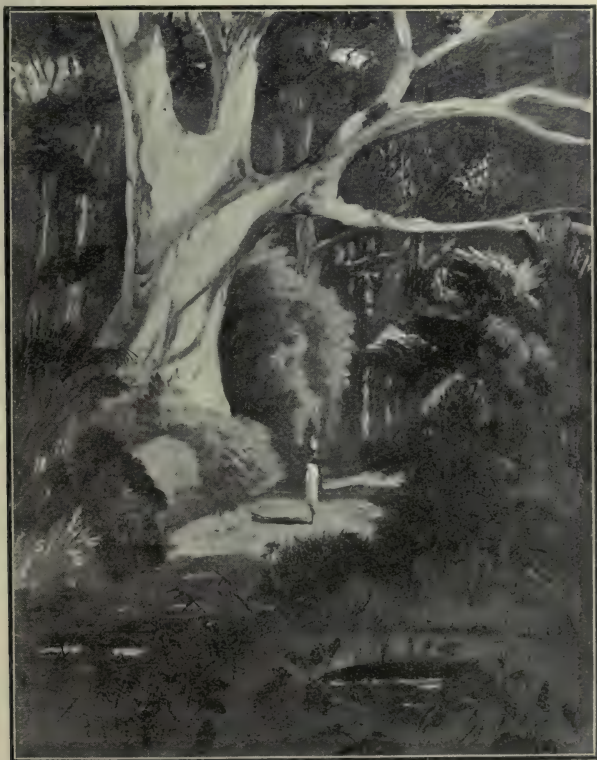


APPROACHING THE BAUCHI HILLS.

rainfall, heat of the sun's rays, all such observations are but broken reeds to lean upon. It may well be that the climatic conditions of the West Coast are not the determining factor in causing the unhealthiness of the region and that it is continual infection through the malaria carrying mosquito, which again is due to the immense native population, which is the real cause ; on this point I will not dogmatise. But having spent seven years chiefly in the unhealthiest parts of the Provinces of Maotto Grosso and Amazonas, in Brazil, I do know that those places reputed bad, and which by all scientific data available should be much worse than any part of the West Coast, and certainly much worse than the interior, are as a matter of fact much less trying

to Europeans. It may be accounted for by the fact that each European is not in South America surrounded by a number of natives who, themselves immune to its bad effects, are yet infected with the malarial germ.

In spite of the climate, or whatever it is which causes health to fail, Europeans can, by taking due care, enjoy good health for some years and quite fair health for an extended term of years in Nigeria and still retire in full possession of their faculties, and I trust that the reader will agree that for those who are naturally interested in native races and their affairs work in conditions of such varied interests of every kind carries with it great compensations, especially when that work is, as it still is in many parts of Nigeria, carried out in places and among people of whom very little is as yet known.



A ROAD IN THE NIGER FOREST.



CHAPTER II.

PONDERATION.

THE RELATIONS EXISTING BETWEEN DOMINANT AND
DEPENDENT RACES. *Quo Vadis?*

THERE are few political officers to whom sometime in their careers, probably earlier than later, certain awkward problems relating to the destinies, in the extreme future, of the subject

native races among whom they work will not have presented themselves. I say probably earlier because later in life the trammels of official routine have often gained such a mastery over the mind that in many cases the administrative eye-sight becomes, as it were, shortened, and though seeing clearly and with microscopic distinctness matters connected with daily routine and the immediate future (so that detectable mistakes may be avoided), is liable to lose in a great measure the power of viewing the larger questions, which, like the peaks of a great mountain range, must be looked at from afar, or they will be obscured by the foot-hills at their base. In early life every political officer will surely have asked himself some such question as this: "What will be the final upshot of my work amongst these natives? I suppose that I am influencing their destinies; but what are those destinies? Will fifty years, a hundred years, three hundred years hence the village head and his elders, who have just left my office, still be telling—possibly my great-great-grandson—that the crops will surely be good this year owing to the great virtues of the white man; that the stock sheep, goats, etc., have all increased greatly, thanks to the white man and Allah! that the neighbouring villagers have encroached on fallow lands and will the white man be so good as to go into the matter; that the fathers of families in the village find great difficulty in disciplining their wives and children, and the white man, being the father, the mother, and the elder brother combined of everybody in the district, will he put this little difficulty straight? Can it be that the state of affairs that I see around me will last for ever? And if it does change, in what way will the change take place, and what form will it adopt?"

"But," it may be said, "why should these young officials in their self-sufficiency boldly glance towards heights which their superiors know very well to exist, but wisely and with true statecraft avoid mentioning, far less thinking about? Such young men must surely be youthful enthusiasts fresh from the Universities. Would it not be better to discourage such idle flights of unguided, uncontrolled, and possibly conceited imaginations? The young man in a public office in England does not worry his head for a moment as to what is going to happen to the great-grandson of the grocer whom he deals with, of the boy who blacks his boots, or indeed with the succeeding generations of all those with whom his daily work brings him into contact. He very wisely leaves that to older heads, and they in a fashion even more-wise know that they are better employed performing their daily duties efficiently than dreaming over such idle theories.

Some would even think that to do so is showing an undue desire to foresee and possibly interfere with the decrees of an all-seeing Providence, and would be deeply offended at the idea. Why, even Cabinet Ministers do not often worry their heads about such matters. Moreover, such speculations are the recognised preserves of philosophic writers with well-established reputations, and it would be a breach of the accepted rules of the game should others poach on these preserves." I freely admit that it is difficult to find any reply to such cogent arguments and reasoning based on established practice in so far as the official whose work lies amongst his fellow-country men in England is concerned. But there is a fundamental difference between the position that he occupies working amongst his fellows, and that of the political officer whose work lies amongst individuals belonging to that vast and dusky mass of humanity which can only be described as Native Subject Races. The first is working in normal conditions amongst people who are living in normal conditions. The white man whose administrative work lies among native races is placed in abnormal conditions, and the people amongst whom he works are living under abnormal conditions.

In the case of a community living in normal conditions there is a continual circulation, a process of natural selection going on, which alters the relative positions in the social scale of individuals to each other or of class to class. Nations are like a thronging crowd following each a road bordered by two deep and impassable ditches. Those in the front rank are able to control the rate of progress of the mass. Nature has planted in the minds of a large minority of the individuals of every race a desire to participate in this control over the actions of others. It is this instinct which predominates in the characters of those individuals whom we generally describe as ambitious. Without modification of the prime motive the outward manifestation of its existence is yet liable to assume two radically different forms. One of these may be termed social and the other anti-social.

To take examples where the existence of both the underlying motive and the form which it assumes can be readily followed. Of two oriental despots, to each of whom the one and only pleasure in life is to gloat over his power over others, one may be possessed of the ambitious instinct in a social form, the other in an anti-social form. The first will not rest content unless his people are visibly flourishing, increasing in numbers and in wealth; he will extend the borders of his empire; he will in short be a benevolent despot. The other, equally possessed

of the ambitious instinct, and quite as jealous of his power to control the actions of others, but in whom the manifestation takes an anti-social form, will, so long as he is able to exert his power, be content whether his people be prosperous or not. It is the wielding of power which his nature requires, and he is equally satisfied be that power exerted in the direction of making others discontented and unhappy, or of making them prosperous and contented. Every ambitious individual, if successful, in proportion to the extent of his success occupies a position similar in kind, though possibly very different in degree, to that of one of the oriental despots described.

The presence of individuals possessed of the ambitious and social instinct is a necessary condition for the welfare and progress, nay for the very existence, of the race.

The ambitious instinct affects the individual in various ways. It may drive one to labour to acquire vast wealth in order to control his fellows (the miser who desires to obtain gold with the simple purpose of hoarding it is so rare that he may be left out of consideration). Another, on the contrary, may show the completest disregard for wealth, and yet exhibit this instinct in an even more pronounced degree by grasping at power through other means. The successful statesman, general, philosopher, poet, millionaire, all these are men in whom this ambitious instinct is developed to a marked extent. It may take the social or the anti-social form in every case. The millionaire may take pleasure in promoting free exchange of commodities, in philanthropic actions, and in rendering others happier generally ; or he may actually employ the power which his wealth gives to him to establish privileges or monopolies, to "corner" the necessities of life, and thus drive down the rate of wages and render life more difficult for those around. The successful statesman may be really anxious to promote the welfare of the country (he must always pretend to be), or he may be actuated by motives purely selfish, such as the gratification of his pride attendant on the fact that a great deal of attention is paid to his doings and sayings. All successful ambitious men are actuated either by the social or by the anti-social instinct. As the proportion of ambitious individuals possessed of the social instinct increases or decreases, so does the nation become vital, great and powerful, or dwindle and finally die or lose its identity, as the case may be.

This struggle to get into the first rank and to control the actions of the mass causes a continual circulation in the body politic. The more active is this circulation the more opportunity

there is for the leader imbued with the social ambitious instinct to grasp the reins of power. Where it is sluggish, the more likelihood is there that the race will fall under the control of unscrupulous, or even worse, incompetent leaders. In the struggle some of those who have been in the front rank are swept away, while the strong man may, if the circulation be free, force his way from the last to the first rank. The more freely this circulation takes place the more vital the race, and the more rapid its progress. The road along which the race is travelling is bordered by ditches which we may describe as those forces which are anti-social, all of which are based on and derive their strength from one great static influence which we term ignorance. The more the collective knowledge of the race increases the wider becomes the road, the more free the circulation, the more rapid the progress, and the greater the vital powers of the race.

Just as no perfectly healthy living body exists but each contains within itself the seeds of disease and death, so with races in no case has the national organisation been so perfected as to ensure that every individual endowed by nature with the requisite ability and the ambitious social instinct shall be in a position to influence the destinies of his fellow-men; nor, what is more important still, that the inefficient and those possessed of the anti-social instinct shall be deprived of such control. Nevertheless, during past decades, great strides have doubtless been made among the nations which constitute what may be called the civilisation of Western Europe (which may be said to include America and Japan), with the result that those nations have become so powerful that they have been able to seize a controlling hold over the affairs of the teeming millions of Asia and Africa.

In proportion as modes of Government have become established permitting of a free, or at all events freer, circulation in the body politic, and the static forces of ignorance, which permitted the actions of the individual to be controlled by either incompetent or anti-social leaders, have been overcome, so the European civilisations have progressed and their national ambitions have increased. The introduction of freer institutions which permit of a successful employment of the social ambitious instinct in the individual have a double effect: they not only call out and stimulate the growth of the social instinct but they starve and wither the anti-social instinct. The ambitious individual whose natural craving is to control others at any cost, even at the cost of their disadvantage or extinction, must, of necessity,

restrict the circulation to a certain degree. It is evident that the masses will not knowingly permit themselves to be controlled to their own disadvantage. A certain measure of unhealthiness in the body politic, *i.e.* ignorance in the masses, is necessary to enable the anti-social leader to flourish. So we find in history that the forces which are ambitious and at the same time anti-social invariably combine to restrict the spread of knowledge beyond a certain point, or, where the growth is too strong to be controlled, at all events to impede its advance. As stated above, it is necessary that the anti-social leader should at all events masquerade in the guise of the social leader, and his actions combined with the ignorance of the masses reacting on each other cause the progress of knowledge to be slow. But an individual, however ignorant, is liable to know, to use a colloquialism, "on which side his bread is buttered," and gradually the world is advancing in civilisation, which really means that the masses are falling under social leadership, that is to say the leadership of men possessed by the social ambitions.

It may be said that this statement is open to objection and that the masses are moving in the direction of governing themselves. I submit that the phrase "Government by the masses" is meaningless, however admirable may be the ideal which it is intended to convey. It is an obvious truth that the actions of weaker individuals are controlled by the stronger individual. Whether the force of the latter is exerted indirectly through recognised "laws" affecting a large group, in which case it is termed "Government," or directly, in which case it is termed "personal influence," is immaterial to the argument. Since nature has endowed mankind unequally, it is unavoidable that the weaker should be controlled by the stronger. It is a truism to say that the stronger must be in a minority. However high the general standard is raised those who are the stronger (it is logical deduction) must be in the minority. The masses, therefore, I submit, never can rule themselves; it is a contradiction in terms to say that they can. The less competent majority is and must always be controlled by the more competent minority. This control may be for the benefit of the majority (in which case it is also good for the controlling minority), or it may lead to their detriment; in the latter case it is also in the long run unavoidably detrimental to the controlling minority also. The race or group of individuals increases in power and prosperity, or dwindles, dies out, or falls under the control of another more powerful race, as it comes under the influence of social or anti-social leaders.

Though the masses can never govern themselves, yet conditions may be created which render it more likely that they will fall under the control of the really social leader. In the case of a race living under normal conditions (by this I mean a race which has not fallen *en masse* under the domination of another race and thus become a subject race living under abnormal conditions) the general character of the masses has doubtless some reaction on the characters of its leaders. An intelligent mass is liable to resist the guidance of the unscrupulous ambitious leader of its own initiative; but far oftener it is rescued therefrom by other leaders possessed of the social ambitious instinct. In this respect the nations which constitute the civilisation of Western Europe have been so favoured by Providence in the immediate past that they occupy to-day a dominating position among the races of the world. Among these nations none has probably been so favoured as Great Britain. Thanks to the existence of the social ambitious instinct in the controlling minority of past generations, institutions have been established which facilitate circulation in the body politic, that is to say facilitate the advance of the social leader and hasten the degradation of the anti-social leader, probably more than has ever been the case amongst any other of the peoples of the world. Not that I claim perfect health for our body politic, but the relative health is good compared to that of other nations. No doubt it contains within itself the seeds of decay and death, and a constant watch and guard, not only to maintain our free institutions but also to ensure their growth, is doubtless necessary, if we, like other world powers in the history of the earth, are not to fall from the high place which under Providence we now occupy.

The destiny of nations has placed under our control during the immediately preceding generations so great a teeming mass of dusky humanity that history furnishes no parallel to the weight of national responsibility which we carry, and on our proper discharge of those responsibilities doubtless depends, not only the maintenance of the position which we now occupy, but our very existence as a distinct race.

As succeeding generations pass two clearly marked tendencies of fundamental importance are appearing which affect the relative positions of the conquered and conquering races. First the groups conquering and conquered have become immensely larger; secondly, they have become more and more divergent in their natures, and consequently the process of amalgamation between the individuals becomes more and more difficult. Not only has Nature decreed that certain races shall differ greatly

in physique to others, that some, for instance, shall be dark-skinned and some light-skinned, but the appearance of great leaders of thought whose mentalities, differing greatly, have impressed themselves on large blocks of the human race, has caused, and is daily causing, a great and increasing divergence of the mental outlook. This again by varying the standard of ethics in the different groups has so acted on the physical natures of the individuals that the impossibility of fusion of certain groups with other groups is now, at this stage of the world's history, not a question of conjecture but of fact. I hazard that it might be possible for the Japanese and Chinese to become amalgamated, but that it is not possible for the European races to amalgamate with even such cognate races as those inhabiting the Indian Peninsula. Fusion between the European and the dark-skinned races of Africa is entirely out of the question. I submit this as a postulate confidently to any European whose work has carried him into close contact with African natives.

Groups of individuals have probably been conquering other groups of individuals since the very earliest dawn of man's appearance on this planet; certainly history is but one long succession of records of such conquests. The examples of the past all go to show, and, if we assume the truth of the maxim that history repeats itself, we must foresee that the same will happen in the future, that one of three destinies awaits the conquered group or race. It either fuses with, *i.e.*, becomes absorbed in or absorbs the conquering race, and this is the usual result; or it re-captures its liberty; or, less often, it dies out. In the first two cases the conquered race reverts from abnormal conditions to normal conditions, and will grow or decay as it falls under good or bad leadership. But so long as a race remains under the domination of another race it cannot be said to be living under normal conditions. Not only is the circulation in the body politic hindered, it is stopped. The organisation is in a state of suspended animation, which, I submit, cannot go on indefinitely; one of two things must happen, extinction or recovery. There is at all events no parallel in history to warrant our assuming that what appears to be a natural law will not operate in the future as it has in the past. We may, I think, confidently predict that the future, however remote, will not see a complete fusion of the European conquering with the coloured conquered races, and a return to normality through that channel cannot be looked for. We may likewise set aside as inconceivable the supposition that the native coloured

aces, to-day under our rule propagating to an ever-increasing extent, will die out.

What then is to be their future?

Historical analogies lead us to one conclusion only, *i.e.*, that they will some day recapture their liberty.

Have we any reason to suppose that yet another solution of the problem is to be found, and that we can introduce a precedent so that the native subject races may remain in existence, unfused with ours, and yet in subjection? If the term subjection be used in its extreme sense I do not for a moment believe that any such solution exists. But if the term be used to designate those relations which I have described as existing between the masses and the leaders, the relations which exist between a more competent man and a less competent, by virtue of which the more competent can control the actions of the less competent for the advantage of both, then I think that a solution can be found, and that a return to normality in the case of the conquered race sufficient to render existence bearable, honourable, and even enjoyable, can be secured. It depends, however, as I shall try to show, entirely on the attitude which we as conquerors adopt towards the conquered, whether we stop the free circulation in the body politic by our institutions or so organise the dependent races as to leave open opportunities for a proper exercise of the social ambitious instinct on the part of the individual native leaders so endowed.

In the dawn of history it is probable that the conquering community did not worry its head about justifying its action in any way. It had to live and that was sufficient. As we have become more civilised, however, and the great leaders of human thought have taught us that each is to a certain extent responsible for his brother, and that nations as well as individuals have responsibilities towards each other, and as it has become more and more plain to all that the natural resources of this planet are, if employed to their full extent, amply large enough to support a population incalculably larger than that now existing upon it, it has become felt that some other justification than that of mere material necessity is required to warrant one race in grasping the reins of power over another.

Different conquering races have dealt with the conquered in various manners. In the early pre-historic days it is probable that the conquering race fused with or exterminated the conquered in every case. It may be said that they enslaved them and that this is not fusion. I contest this point. Without exception the women of such enslaved races became the concubines of

the conquered, and so fusion gradually took place. In innumerable cases individuals of the conquered race were granted their freedom and the same privileges as were enjoyed by individuals of the conquering race. In many notable cases male slaves rose to the front or governing ranks of the community in which they lived. Thus fusion took place. In the sixteenth century the Spaniards and Portuguese to a great extent exterminated the Red Indians of South America, though even in this case considerable fusion took place, and sexual relations and even inter-marriage occurred between Spanish and Portuguese males and Indian females. We ourselves, although it was certainly not an avowed policy and probably one which public opinion in England or amongst the colonists themselves would not have tolerated had they been able to foresee the result, by introducing our own system of land-tenure quietly but surely exterminated the North American Indian. Indeed, the process was even more complete than in the case of Spain, for the mental and physical nature of the British differed more from that of the Indian than did that of the Spaniard. This is a statement of fact, I hasten to add, not in any way derogatory to the many splendid qualities of the band of conquerors which is headed by the names of Cortes and Pizarro. It is a physiological fact, for which we deserve neither credit nor blame, that fusion between ourselves and native races is perhaps more difficult than that between any other European and native races.

Vae Victis was for long an accepted principle and it was not until comparatively recent times that the idea that the conqueror had assumed any responsibilities towards the conquered came to be seriously considered, or even considered at all. Such clemency as was exerted was the outcome of purely utilitarian motives. At best the wise conqueror did not damage the conquered race more than was necessary to reduce it to subjection, because, by so doing, he would be damaging his own property. Motives of compassion would also restrain in some cases the conqueror from inflicting extreme cruelty on the conquered, just as he would be restrained from inflicting cruelty on a captured herd of stock. The idea that the conqueror had every right to exploit the conquered to any extent for his own benefit was universally entertained until very recent times, and indeed has not yet altogether disappeared. The more advanced idea that the conqueror has assumed responsibilities towards the conquered, that he has taken up "the white man's burden," is of even more recent date.

As Christianity has spread Christian races have generally, in theory at least, placed conversion before their eyes as justifying their action as conquerors. The Spaniards gave the Indian the option of conversion or extermination in repeated instances, and the same may be said of the Muhammadan conquerors. Within quite recent times this plea of conversion as justification has been frankly ignored. We ourselves, particularly, place in the forefront of our policy an abnegation of any proselytizing intention; while we assume the responsibility of the economic welfare of the individual in this life we disclaim any responsibility as to his hereafter. The justification of conversion has to a great extent given way to the justification of "the humanitarian ideal." "We must assume control over the affairs of such a group because the leading men of that group are bullying and oppressing the rank and file. They are impeding healthy circulation in the body politic, and this is interfering with the normal exchange of commodities, so that not only will they be better off if we look after them but so shall we. We owe it to ourselves and to them to establish a better state of affairs." Thus we argue.

Acting on this principle the stronger groups have in this day of grace brought to a state of subjection all those weaker groups inhabiting the earth which it is possible so to control. A large proportion of mankind is living under conditions which cannot be described as normal. History has, I think, no exact parallel to this state of affairs.

Is it conceivable that masses of humanity should continue to exist indefinitely under conditions that are abnormal? The whole tendency of modern civilisation amongst the conquering races themselves is in an opposite direction. The institutions of every country are being modified in the direction of breaking down those obstacles which prevent the control of a nation's destinies from passing out of the hands of any particular class. The preserves created by kings, aristocratic classes, religious denominations—by means of which the control of a nation's destinies remained, for better or for worse, in the hands of a privileged few—have all been increasingly broken into during recent generations; the nations being impelled no doubt thereto by the instinct that the group of individuals which was free from such drawbacks would have the advantage over other groups still weighed down by those disadvantages.

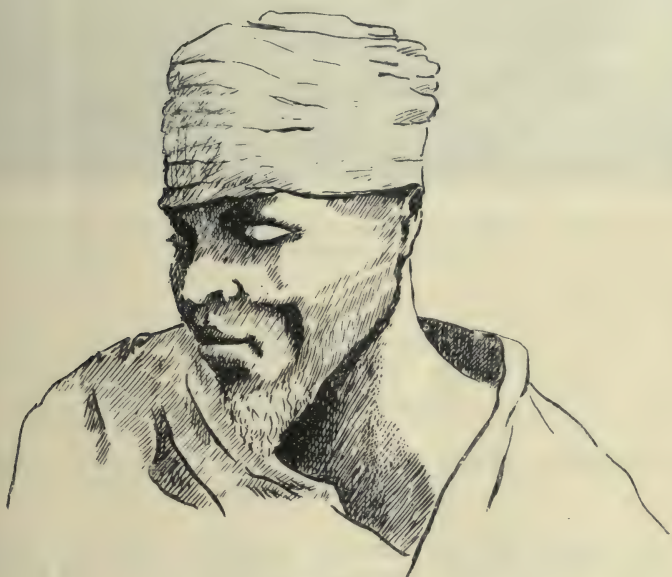
These tendencies have disturbed the consciences of many individuals amongst the ruling races regarding their responsibilities towards the conquered. They are daily more and more

asking themselves whether it can be right to establish amongst subject races those very forces of bureaucratic Government which we have been at so much pains to abolish in our own? The idea that we have the right if we have the power to exterminate the conquered has long passed away. We have even got beyond the idea that we may, if again we have the power, exploit the conquered. "Have we," many are now asking themselves, "any right to interfere at all with these people?" And not without good reason. It is not enough to say that we carry the *Pax Britannica* and economic prosperity wherever we go. The Japanese may be quoted as an Asiatic race which has prospered amazingly during the generations immediately passed without the assistance of a European conqueror, indeed the advance there has far outrun that to be found in any conquered group in the same time.

It may be said that had William the Conqueror been possessed of maxim guns, typewriters, and a few modern inventions, he would have occupied Britain with a diminutive force; he would have established a bureaucratic form of Government with a few District Commissioners scattered over the land. Doubtless he would have built railways for us, encouraged our trade, improved our economic position, in short he could and no doubt would have done for us all that we do for the conquered native races. In that case we should have avoided the Wars of the Roses, King Charles would not have lost his head, countless evils we should have escaped. But should we, had we been under such conditions for the past nine centuries, even to-day be contented? During all those generations should we not have kept the day of independence fresh in our memories? So it is, it may be said, with the native races living under our rule.

Whether such arguments are valid or fallacious depends, I submit, on the orientation given to the policy adopted by our Government toward the native races, for whose welfare we have made ourselves responsible. If we content ourselves with securing for the native peace and plenty, and nothing more, that is much, but it is not all; it is not enough to avert from us, in the long run, the effects of a growing desire for freedom on the part of the conquered on the one hand, and the throes of an unquiet conscience amongst ourselves on the other hand. We must, I submit, do more than that. We must give scope to the higher yearnings of human nature. We must open up channels and opportunities for the exercise of what I have described as the social ambitious instinct. We must permit, within certain limits and the more they can be gradually extended

the better, the native communities to manage their own affairs ; we must impede as little as possible the circulation in the body politic and allow the native leader endowed with a legitimate and useful ambition to enjoy to a reasonable extent opportunities for the exertion of his talent. The means by which the course towards this end can be followed and by what means it can be, and is being, deflected, I propose to discuss in another chapter.



“ KISMET.”



TORNADO NEAR ZUNGERU, SHEWING REFLECTION OF WHITE NIMBUS CLOUD,
ON RAIN CURTAIN BEHIND.

CHAPTER III.

PONDERATION.

DIRECT VERSUS INDIRECT RULE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO NIGERIAN PRACTICE.

THERE are three different systems any of which may be adopted by the dominating European race for the control of a native race. One of these may be termed Direct Rule and another Indirect Rule. To the third it is hard to attach a brief designation, it is a kind of half-way house between the other two.

By Direct Rule I mean that form of administration which places the Government of the country entirely in the hands of European officials, minor posts only, such as clerkships, being filled by natives, while the policing of the country is entrusted to European officers, with coloured subordinates in Government employ wearing Government uniforms. This system necessarily entails either the abolition of the Emirs and Chiefs.

or their retention as figure heads only ; the abolition of native Courts of Justice or such curtailment of their powers as to render them of little effect. In short it means replacing the Native Leader by the European Official, with his native staff. The underlying policy of this system is the establishment of European institutions and modes of life and thought among the natives as rapidly as possible.

By Indirect Rule I mean a system of administration which leaves in existence the administrative machinery which had been created by the natives themselves ; which recognises the existence of Emirs, Chiefs and native Councils, native Courts of Justice, Muhammadan Courts, Pagan Courts, native Police controlled by a native executive, as real living forces, and *not* as curious and interesting pageantry ; by which European influence is brought to bear on the native indirectly, through his chiefs, and not directly through European officers—political, police, etc., and by which the European keeps himself a good deal in the background, and leaves the mass of native individuals to understand that the orders which come to them emanate from their own Chief rather than from the all-pervading white man. The underlying policy of this system is to assist the native to develop that civilisation which he can himself evolve.

The third system is a mixture whereby the white man, realising that he has not the force necessary to enable him to deprive the native governing classes of all their power, at least whittles it down to a great extent ; still retaining in a certain measure native forms, and etiquette, but in point of fact depriving the native to an ever-growing degree of any real control in the Government of the country. The underlying policy of this system is identical with that underlying Direct Rule.

To discuss the first of these systems, Direct Rule. This system has many supporters. In fact the vast majority of people who have not been in close contact with native affairs, and indeed, many who have, would I think say that it is the only proper system. "What is the good," they say, "of bolstering up these corrupt, often ridiculous institutions? Make a clean sweep of the lot. Waste no time trying to reform what has proved itself to be old-fashioned and out-of-date and ineffective. Introduce an executive of wholesome-minded young British officers ; let them learn the native languages ; they will soon know more about the needs of the natives than the natives themselves. Set up British Courts of Justice ; a few modifications in English Law will be necessary, but a criminal code can

be easily drafted; let the native see that he is equal to the white man before the law. Certainly respect all religious institutions; these do not affect material issues. But in so far as is possible introduce the institutions which have been so successful in our own country; encourage individualism, raise the native out of his servile state, teach him to be a man and look the world in the face. Show him how ridiculous and harmful are many of his superstitions. Possibly after a time you may find that a selected few of the natives may be advanced to hold quite fairly responsible positions. Encourage capital to come into the country, lease or sell large blocks of land, now unoccupied, to Europeans. By all means avoid all possibility of speculation, drive out the company promoter, but encourage white individuals to settle. They will bring capital and brains; they will plant, they will irrigate, they will teach the native to farm his land. Thus all will be well, and there will be no necessity whatsoever for any change to take place ever at all." These arguments sound reasonable enough and in point of fact (I will not particularise) large blocks of native subject races have been governed in this fashion not without some apparent outward success so far. Given extraordinarily good political officers, much may be done under this system.

Further, were the native what he has been described and what he is very generally supposed to be, "half-devil, half-child," and we could be certain that he would so remain in all succeeding generations, I think that these arguments would be difficult to refute. There is no doubt that under such a system the individual native does enjoy a great deal of material prosperity, and this should be quite enough for anybody who can be so described. Unfortunately the description quoted is, in my opinion, quite misleading and mischievous. The native is a human being like ourselves, but in a different stage of development. Some natives are, even to-day, in the stage of our Druidical ancestors, whereas others are in the stage which we passed through in about the Middle Ages. The whirligig of time has brought us from five hundred to a thousand years ahead of them in the process of evolution, that is all. Man is said to have been on the planet for something like 250,000 years. Say that historic times date back for five thousand years, at the very outside. Who can say but that fifty thousand years ago the natives of the Bauchi plateau were not as much in advance of the people of Europe as we are of them now? It is quite possible that some African tribe had invented the bow and arrow before the people of France or Britain had thought of

this weapon. The relative superiority of an individual armed with bow and arrow over an individual armed with a spear would be considerable. The force which has enabled us to impose our will upon the native subject races is after all purely material. I fear that the most enthusiastic political officer would not hazard the proposition that the natives are dominated only, or even chiefly, by our intellectual powers, except of course in so far as these find an expression in material force. No subject race I fear was ever conquered by pure reason, emanating from Europe at all events.

We do not know what happened in the obscure past ; who will dare to prophecy what will happen in the obscure future ? Which of the races now existing on the earth will be found to be the ruling races 5,000 years hence. It may well happen that some dark-skinned writer from the Bauchi plateau will coin happy phrases descriptive of the white races, who knows ? This much however, I believe to be certain ; any system of Government which is based on the assumption that the natives will, even a hundred years hence, be in the same stage of development as they are to-day, stands foredoomed to bring about hardship, discontent, and disaster.

It is our great privilege and our great responsibility in this age, when fusion with the native races has become out of the question, and extermination inconceivable, to control the development of literally hundreds of millions of human beings, which constitute the native subject races, but we cannot, even should we desire to do so, check that development. I do not believe that we can promote the development of the native if we confine ourselves to supplying his material wants only. Nor do I believe that we can enable him, to use Walter Bagehot's admirable phrase, "Ascend the steep slope of Civilisation," by cramming him with ideas which have now become part of our nature, but of which we had very little conception a few hundred years ago. The general tendency of European civilisation is to encourage individualism, and in my humble opinion this tendency is wholly good and useful. But what service would have been performed by any leader of thought who had tried to persuade the people of these Islands to adopt modern "individualistic" theories and systems in the time of Queen Elizabeth ? His influence would have been rightly termed wholly pernicious. The mind of a nation has to prepare itself gradually for such changes. Essentially good, such ideas, if introduced at the wrong moment, may do infinite harm ; yet this is what we, in our mistaken philanthropy, are continually doing. Under a system of Direct

Rule it is impossible to do anything else. I could quote large sections of natives in every way intelligent and industrious, which have already been brought into what is, in my opinion, a thoroughly unsatisfactory condition, owing to the overthrow and abolition of native institutions by a misguided paternal Government, a state of affairs which many of the more intelligent of the natives themselves recognise as disastrous. In such cases we find a rapid deterioration in the physique of the natives. Not only are they victims of epidemic and contagious diseases, which is to be expected, but the extraordinary bodily power of healing which is found in almost every native who has not come closely into contact with European civilisation is greatly diminished. The native in place of enjoying a robust constitution becomes fretful, excitable, and irritable, prone to tears. He becomes a ready victim to the vices of the white man. These, his powerful constitution enables him to indulge in for a time, to an extraordinary extent, without ill effects, but their influence shortens his life, and is very noticeable in his offspring.

“But,” it may be said, “then the work of administration has not been properly carried out. Stringent Laws should be passed, more supervision exerted; you should have a larger administrative staff.”

The panacea of all administrative evils is, I know, supposed to be an increase of staff. In my humble opinion no more mischievous idea could prevail when adopted with regard to questions relating to the administration of natives. So far from being an assistance a larger staff may actually increase administrative difficulties, if the direction of its energies be wrong. If the policy be guided by right principles, no doubt, within limits, the larger the staff the better. But if the policy be misdirected, or especially if there be no clearly defined and well understood policy when each member of the staff is liable to have, and worse still, to put into force with all the prestige and power of the Government at his back, ideas of his own, then the larger the staff the completer the chaos.

African natives are not by any means all alike. There is an immense difference between the point from which a native of Kano, for instance, and a native of Lagos, view life. In many ways their characters are radically different. I should like to emphasise this point as the genuinely philanthropic and disinterested efforts of individuals in this country, who freely expend time, money, and energy on behalf of the native races, in a manner to which it would be hard to find a parallel in any other country except perhaps in the United States of America,

are often rendered abortive and productive of harm rather than good, owing to their assumption that one man with a dark skin necessarily knows the needs and idiosyncrasies of another with a dark skin. No greater error could be made. Not only is a native of Lagos in many ways differently constituted from a native of Kano, but a native of Kano who has spent some time in Lagos, and *vice versa*, may very probably, owing to the adaptability of the native mind, be more out of touch with the mass of the natives of Kano than the white man himself. He need not even go so far as Lagos to change his views in a radical fashion. It is sufficient for him to spend some time in any place not far distant from his birth-place, under the influence of European ideas, to bring about a remarkable alteration in his views. He quickly becomes denationalised. In this manner interpreters and native agents lose with extraordinary rapidity their value to a political officer. It suffices for them to be attached to a white man for about five or six years to alter their whole point of view of life. To quote an extreme case. When the proposal for an expedition to occupy Kano was in the air, in the early days of the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria, doubts were freely expressed by European officers as to whether, seeing that many of the companies of native soldiers were composed of natives of Kano or of individuals who had relations in Kano, it would be safe to employ those companies on the expeditionary column, as armed resistance to our occupation was to be expected. Events showed this anticipation to be quite mistaken. Not only did the Kano natives attack their own town with great zest, but very strict measures had to be adopted to prevent these very men from looting their birth-place. Having a complete knowledge of the town they were quite liable to use it for the most improper expeditions. Take a native farmer of the most respectable type, law-abiding, respectful to his chiefs, docile to the point of servility—put a white man's uniform on his back and give him a rifle, and, unless you are extremely careful and strict, he will in a very brief space of time turn into the biggest rogue unhung—capable of burning his parents' house over their heads and even wantonly shooting at them.

It may be a compliment to the white man's force of character, or to the native's power of adaptability, but the transition from what I may call the feudal state of mind, in which the native untouched by civilisation is reared, to the "individualistic" state of mind in which the vast majority of Europeans find themselves to-day, and to which they give expression in their every act quite unconsciously, takes place with extraordinary rapidity. Now

this would be a good thing if the European could fuse with the native. The native would ascend the steep slope of civilisation at a run. Or if we could discipline the bulk of the native races in the same manner in which we discipline our troops, if we could have a staff of even one white man to every hundred and fifty natives, direct administration would be perhaps the best; but these two conditions are out of the question.

Although natives from different sections of African communities differ bodily and mentally to an extraordinary degree, there is one point of resemblance. When unmodified by European influence, they are all in what I have called for want of a better term the "feudal" state of mind as opposed to the "individualistic" state of mind. By this I mean that the guiding force in their lives is a personal discipline. They recognise, that is to say, to the very root of their nature, that it is the fate of one man to "grovel," as we should term it, before another, and for another to "grovel" before him. They may be

said to march through life in single file, receiving personal homage from those below, and rendering personal homage to those above. All that the rendering of homage, in the way of paying taxes, obeying orders in respect to work, conveys, follows as a matter of course. The idea of all men being equal and having equal rights is entirely outside the scope of their imaginations. The bump of veneration is developed to quite an extraordinary degree in the native living under normal conditions. I know that certain political officers, especially those that have worked among the raw tribes of the hills and forests will demur at this generalisation, saying that the bump of veneration is not at all developed amongst such communities. That they are a mere rabble, each man scrambling for himself as best he can.



I do not admit for a moment that this can be true, though I cannot claim to have come into personal contact with every tribe, even in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria. I base my deductions on the following arguments. Those tribes that we found existing have from time immemorial been engaged in a severe struggle for existence. The more primitive the tribe, the more inaccessible its location, the more severe, probably, has been the struggle in which it has been engaged. To carry it through the ages of this struggle the tribe must have had some organisation by which common action for the public good was secured. No doubt some tribes went down and disappeared altogether in this struggle. Those that we find still existing must have had some better organisation which has enabled them to hold their own as clear and recognisable groups.

The bump of veneration is as I have stated liable to dwindle and diminish in a distressingly rapid manner. In certain circumstances this would be a very good thing, but in the circumstances actually existing this tendency is one which, unless it is checked, rapidly produces a chaotic state of affairs and the moral and physical degeneration of the race. "But," it may be said, "surely this cannot be true as a generalisation. Why should modern ideas as regards the rights of man operate more disastrously in the case of the native than in that of the European?" The reply to this is, I think, the fact that the European and civilised races have at their doors a controlling and disciplining force, which the native of Africa has not and has never had. I mean the "Wolf at the Door." We can afford in civilised communities to dispense with the control of personal homage to a great and growing extent owing to the existence amongst us of the dominating restraining forces of poverty, want, and hunger; forces which grow as civilisation becomes more complex, and as the mental and bodily needs of man expand, so that what would be no hardship whatsoever to an African and the loss of which would have no controlling effect over his actions, does exert a pitiless and relentless control over the actions of his more complex European brother. In the civilised communities a man has got to work to live; in order to live at all comfortably he must work remarkably hard. Take away that control and see whether you could afford to dispense with feudal ideas of personal homage. I know that some persons will say that they see no reason why this should not be done. "It is only a matter of education; remove ignorance, that stone round the neck of humanity, and each individual will carry that in his breast which will drive him to perform his duties to the community

and his fellows without any necessity for the application of rein or spur from another." That may be a true forecast, but all I can say is that the millennium will then have arrived.

One thing is certain, the millennium has not arrived in Africa. Once you withdraw from the African the restraint and spur which is afforded by his innate sense of homage due to and from one individual to another he becomes at once like a kite without a tail. Moreover, having taken from him what he has you have nothing to give him in exchange. Either you convert him into a vagabond or you expect him to be guided by the light of pure reason, shed through the medium of religion, ethical education, or whatever means you choose to employ. You expect him, in short, to leap in one bound to a position far higher up the slope of civilisation than we ourselves occupy.



ON THE NIGER BANK, LOKOJA.

The base of all African organisation, of the very existence of the tribe, is rooted in the discipline exerted by the head of the family over his dependents. That is the root basis of the feudal system. In order that the head of the family may exercise the control necessary to render the system effective he must enjoy powers over the individual members of his family which, to our modern ideas, are repugnant. Were they not repugnant

the European staff, even though expanded to the fullest extent that the resources of the country could afford, could not possibly put such a system into effect, because nearly every European officer is imbued with individualistic ideas which he consciously or unconsciously imparts to the native. That in my opinion is the reason why the increase of the European staff is not a panacea for all administrative evils. If they are working on radically wrong lines the more political officers you have, the closer they get into touch with the natives, the more disastrous their well-intended efforts become. In my humble opinion shortage of European staff has been the salvation of more than one district in Africa.

There is another point in connection with the size of the European staff which may, I think, be emphasized here, and that is the enormous expense of employing British officials in tropical Africa, especially West Africa. The extensive home leave which the climate renders necessary, the extraordinary tendency—due also to the climate—for the work of subordinate officers in the technical departments to deteriorate, thus making the cost of works of public utility and transport abnormally high, renders the cost of each European official employed in the country extremely heavy. To arrive at this sum a sound basis to adopt is to double the amount of his personal salary and local allowances; that is the annual charge of the official to the country by the time all his claims upon it, including his pension, have been paid. If for no other reason than expense it is absolutely necessary that we should find a mode of administering these territories without the employment of a large number of European officers.

To turn to the other panacea I have mentioned, the law. The enactment of laws is often regarded as a way out of every administrative difficulty. "Here is an abuse; render certain action illegal by Proclamation or Ordinance or Act of Parliament," and legislators not infrequently imagine that the abuse is cured. It is through Laws that the community ensures its well-being from interference by what may be described as anti-social acts of individuals, that is to say, by what we term crime. It is true that individuals can be restrained from certain anti-social acts, and that relations between individuals can be regulated to a certain extent by laws formed in the interest of the community; but the scope and action of laws, the extent to which the community can control the individual by laws, is strictly limited in two directions. First by the degree to which the anti-social practice is common. If the majority of

individuals are addicted to a certain practice, a law which interferes with it will not be tolerated, and will probably not be enacted. Could anything be more anti-social and hostile to the community, for instance, than the marriage of persons afflicted by diseases which they transmit to their offspring? Yet it would be very difficult to frame a Law which would render this a crime, although it is true that such a law has frequently been mooted. To take another example, parents who bring up their children in a careless manner, with disregard for their mental or physical development, undoubtedly commit far more serious anti-social acts than does the starving man who "pinches" a loaf of bread. The Law punishes the latter, but who would suggest framing a law to deal with the former?

Opinion is frequently divided as to whether an act is anti-social or not, and, in point of fact, what may be a crime—that is to say, harmful to the community—in one age, and in one set of circumstances, may be a positively social act and useful to the community in another set of circumstances. I submit that the well-being of a community may be safeguarded by laws to a limited extent only, even in the case of communities accustomed to study and realise their own needs; and to a very limited extent when they are framed by an alien race to meet the requirements of vast and complex communities, whose real needs it is extremely hard to ascertain. I will take one case. There is a game of dice termed "cha cha," played with cowrie shells, which is very prevalent among a certain class of native in Nigeria, especially those who have been in contact with the European. What are for the natives large fortunes are frequently staked and lost in this game. Native custom punishes this very severely. The Law, framed in accordance with the needs of our own country, enables us to punish not the player but the individual who keeps the house in which the game is played, if he makes a profit out of such gambling! A large number of carriers having obtained a certain amount of native beer settle down at the end of the day's march to enjoy a little gamble in a neighbouring compound. They become excited, keep it up all night, become heavily indebted to each other, and one of them next day, under pressure of debt, runs away with his load. It would have been very easy to have prevented the "cha cha" altogether had the law been framed to meet this obvious necessity, but no, the law permits the owner of the compound situated in the middle of Africa to be punished if he, being the owner of a lodging, for profit, permits a game of chance to be played in that lodging. Could anything

be more absurd than this? And yet that was the law for many years, and is, I believe, still the law in the Northern Provinces.

Ordinances have their uses, I freely admit, more especially when they embody some native law or custom as they consolidate that custom, but they are not a panacea for every evil which may arise.

It is an ungracious and invidious task to go into the difference which rapidly makes itself felt when a native is removed from the influence of his own institutions, and I will here content myself by saying that it is a fact to which attention has been drawn time after time by persons well qualified to judge. It is the universal testimony of such persons that the native who has come under European influences to such an extent as to modify his habits is generally speaking not so complete a man, using the term in the broadest sense, as the native who has been brought up and remained under the influence of purely native institutions. There has been a tendency, however, to assume that this is unavoidable. I venture to express the opinion that not only is this disaster avoidable but that it must be avoided, and that it is especially important and necessary that it should be avoided in the case of the native of Africa. The potential danger, remote as it may be, is greater in Africa than amongst the Asiatics, for the reasons that the African is physically endowed with an extraordinary amount of animal vitality. In this respect, in my opinion, he far surpasses the Asiatic, and in many cases the European himself. The mental and bodily vigour shewn by, to take examples, the native troops and porters on the march; the extraordinary capacity of memory exhibited sometimes by the clerks whom we employ (although they have learnt to read and write, a process which is supposed to destroy the powers of memorial retention) and very generally by the illiterate political agents, interpreters, and especially by some of the official messengers employed by the Emirs, is a matter of surprise to those who have worked in close contact with the native.

To quote a remarkable case which came under my observation. There used to be a man, appropriately named Noah, at Kano, who had in his mind, ready to produce at a moment's notice, a complete history, not only of the events in the Kano Emirate but in most of the other Filane Emirates also, since the days of the Filane Jihad in 1805, with a full account of all the ramifications and genealogies of the important Filane families (a colossal store) together with a mental record of all the dates of all important events in these Emirates. These dates he, by a peculiar mental process which rendered the operation

infinitely more complicated, reckoned from the year in which he was speaking, and not from any prior date, "Such and such an event," he would say, "happened so and so many years ago." Thus the whole string of recorded dates had to be brought forward in his mind in each successive year, a mental gymnastic of a colossal description when the mass of facts which he had stored in his mind is taken into consideration.

It may well be asked how it is that we are able to control, with absurdly inadequate forces, races so virile and capable, with such mental and physical endowments. The reply is, I think, that there are two flaws to be found in the mental and moral equipment of the average African. I trust that I may give no offence to my many African friends when I say that inherent lack of honesty is the first great flaw. Indeed many have told me, with regret, that they recognise this. Comparatively rarely can one African depend upon another keeping his word. Feudal discipline to a certain extent overcame this defect, but to a certain extent only, and the history of the Filane Emirates, to take one example only, is full of records of the blackest treachery of leading natives towards leading natives. Where the leaders are capable of such conduct what can be expected of the common herd? Except in very rare instances it is a regrettable fact that this defect is enlarged rather than diminished by contact with European civilisation. The second is lack of mental initiative. The African artisan, for example, is extraordinarily clever in imitation, and given an object to copy he shows ample resource in adapting the means at his disposal to that purpose. There was an ordinary native blacksmith at Kano some years ago, who given a key to imitate produced the most perfect duplicate imaginable. Not only would it open the lock as well as the original, but he went so far as to remove from his imitation all appearance of newness, so that the two placed together in a bundle could hardly be distinguished. But unless thus impelled from the outside the native seldom branches out from a recognised groove and this mental lethargy is characteristic of his mind. It is very possible, however, that this defect may be remedied. After all, it is only within comparatively recent generations that the European nations have developed genius for invention.

There is no necessity or good reason, in my humble opinion, why we should cause a deterioration in the native character and physique as a result of our assumption of control over his affairs. I believe the native institutions, laws, and customs, certainly evolved to meet the needs of the community, (needs which were pressed home by the rude shocks necessarily incurred

in the struggle for existence) which, however unreasonable they may appear to us, have so far proved their value and utility in that they preserved these communities from extinction through countless generations, to be the means by which we can most surely and with least risk of disaster control in a favourable manner the development of those races which Providence has entrusted to our care. That certain native customs can be quoted which are harmful is no answer to this argument. I admit that in some cases we are bound to interfere. We could not allow the dark practices of the Aro who threw their victims to the crocodiles, or trial by ordeal, to continue. But even in such extreme cases as these, where native customs appear to us as abominable, we need not, I think, if we examine carefully, be so shocked as to give up all hopes of any reasonable administrative organisation having been evolved by the natives themselves.

To take the punishment by mutilation practised amongst the Muhammadan communities. Talking to the Emir of Bauchi on one occasion in respect to the great prevalence of theft, he said to me, "It is true that the white man is very merciful, and merciful even to thieves, but why is he not equally merciful to people who do not steal? Before the white man came we were very unmerciful to thieves, and we cut off their hands, that is true, but I am an old man, and on three occasions only that I can remember has a thief been so punished. Theft was a thing which we hardly took into account, it never happened in the towns, although sometimes the pagans over whom we had no control attacked the caravans on the roads. Now you are daily putting people into prison for theft, and yet the honest townspeople cannot go out of their houses or sleep in peace for fear of thieves, so I think that the Muhammadan is the more merciful of the two, for he is merciful to the honest man as well as to the thief." It was difficult to find any reply on the spur of the moment! I do not say that I would advocate mutilation, this is certainly a custom that is repugnant to us to-day.

To turn to trial by ordeal, common among Pagans. Take the form where the criminal is invited to drink off a bowl poisoned by sass-wood, so that Providence may indicate his guilt or the contrary by causing him to die or to escape. This, probably, is merely a form of execution. A trial, perhaps not conducted exactly on the lines of our trials, has taken place, and the bowl is poisoned or not as the tribunal has found the man guilty or innocent. Thus it is simply a form of execution. Throwing to the crocodiles was probably another

form of execution. The victims had probably committed crimes against society and possibly well deserved punishment, even extreme punishment. When we consider the forms of execution prevalent in Europe, in England even, in the Middle Ages, and remember that old women were burnt as witches at no very distant date amongst ourselves, while we have a right to be shocked at mutilation, poisoning, and throwing to the crocodiles, we have no right to say that on this account the native laws and customs are generally to be regarded with contempt and disgust.

I will be so bold as to say that the experiment of respecting



CROSSING THE KADUNA AT SUNSET

native Law and Custom has been made not without success in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, not only in the Muhammadan states but amongst the more primitive tribes also, by adopting the principle of Indirect Rule as described in the beginning of this chapter, and allowing the natives a very great measure of local self-government.

Before proceeding to discuss the system of Indirect Rule more fully I would pass on to the third system mentioned, that

is to say the half-way house, where native institutions are to be supported *pro tem*.

I admit that where the ultimate object is to establish Direct Rule circumstances may render it necessary to adopt this system, but I wish to emphasise that it is the system which imposes the greatest hardship imaginable on the natives of all classes, and upon the European executive officers responsible for carrying it out effectively. If you frankly abolish your Emirs (I may mention in parenthesis that this policy has been adopted by the French in West Africa, who are radical direct rulers) divide the country up into districts, and place a European in charge of each, both natives and Europeans know exactly where they are. The European is responsible for law and order, and he is supplied with an executive for the purpose of enforcing them. If the executive is not sufficient, then he cannot be blamed if law and order are not maintained. Further, there is no room for double-dealing on the part of the natives between him and the native Emir or chief. But if a complete reorganisation of this sort does not take place, and the Emir and the native institutions are left in existence, but continually hampered, curtailed in their powers, and overlooked in a hostile manner by a European officer, the mental and physical hardship entailed on all concerned is past belief. To take the position of an Emir, for instance, under this system. In an independent native State prior to our occupation, the office of an Emir was one of enormous responsibility and great delicacy. Throughout his dominions the people looked to him as the source and fountainhead of all power, but in point of fact, although an all-powerful autocrat in theory, he was surrounded by pitfalls. He was encircled by an influential group of intermediaries between himself and the people, who occupied very much the position of the Barons in the Middle Ages. His continuance in power, indeed his very existence, depended upon his balancing the interests of these notables as against his own, and those of the populace as against those of the notables. His position was one which might be expected to develop, and in point of fact very often did develop, administrative and diplomatic qualities of a very high order. The one essential was that he should maintain discipline amongst the notables, and should do this without offending those greedy chiefs, rapacious of power, some of whom might reasonably hope to succeed him were he deposed. Once he lost this ascendancy the influence of his name dwindled and disappeared, the people would not obey his orders, and chaos, probably a revolt, took place.

Now we will imagine his position after the country has been occupied. A Resident is placed in the Emirate. It is a comparatively easy thing, if it is clearly understood that the policy of the Government is to support the Emir and the Resident is instructed to carry out that policy strictly, for the Resident and the Emir between them so to manage things that the Emir retains his ascendancy. But if the ultimate goal of the policy is to abolish all these "effete administrations" and the Resident knows that he is expected gradually to extinguish the Emir, the position of both in the intermediary stage, it may well be imagined, is extremely uncomfortable. The native is extraordinarily quick at detecting the trend of events. The notables so soon as they see that the Emir is not supported and that the power is in the hands of the Resident will rapidly start the most ingenious and complicated intrigues, playing fast and loose between the two authorities. The position of the Emir must become intolerable. The African character is nothing if not sensitive to affront, and his own chiefs will discover methods of flouting and insulting an Emir which it is extremely hard for an outsider to detect, but which nevertheless must render the poor man's life unbearable. They will start intrigues and machinations against each other. Further, they will raise a barrier between the Resident and the people which may easily become almost impenetrable. They are placed in a peculiarly advantageous position to throw dust into the eyes of the European officers as they can accuse the Emir of malpractices for which they themselves are responsible perhaps, whilst the Emir accuses them of malpractices for which he is perhaps responsible. Altogether a tangle is created from which it is almost impossible to unravel the truth. Thus chaos arises, the people are oppressed, extortions occur and it is impossible to discover the guilty party. Moreover, the Emir, Chiefs, and people, all are equally discontented, and, if the situation goes on long enough, they are quite liable to patch up a peace against the common enemy, the white man, and then the fat is in the fire. The same difficulties occur in the case of all kinds of native Chiefs as well as Emirs. Where the authority is vested in a council as it sometimes is in the case of elected Chiefs, the position is just the same or even more difficult.

Where no policy is laid down at all, it follows that there will be a divergence of practice between the European administrative officers. Some will be "direct" and some "indirect" rulers and some will choose the half way house. An officer of any intelligence will certainly adopt some general rule to

guide him in practice, perhaps consciously, perhaps unconsciously, and his temperament influenced by his education will lead him to adopt one of these three systems. The more his mind is cast in what one may call the official mould, that is to say the better official he is, the more painstaking, the more accurate, the more scrupulously fair, the more liable he is to expect the same standard in others including the natives. So it happens, I am sorry to say, that very often, though not by any means always, the best "official" does not always make the best administrative officer.



A FLOODED VILLAGE AT SUNSET.

The more likely he is in his abhorrence of what he sees of the weak points in the native systems to lose sight of the broader issues, and the more likely he is to be a rabid "direct-ruler."

The result of a divergence of opinion amongst the European officers, when the policy is not clearly laid down, is the administration of a native unit on totally different lines by different succeeding political officers at different times. The shortness of the tour of service in West Africa, and the needs of the administration, which do in practice, whatever may be the theory,

render it impossible to keep the Residents for a succession of tours in the same province, often causes the different administrative units to change hands with comparative frequency. The position of a native Chief, it may be imagined, in such circumstances may be bewildering, perplexing and harassing to a degree almost past belief. One Resident, an indirect ruler, lectures him on the necessity of his exhibiting administrative initiative and encourages him to play the strong man and promises him his support. He acts on this, very likely making himself extremely unpopular with his own chiefs, perhaps with his own people as well. He earns the name of the white man's man. Then comes along another Resident with more democratic ideas who wishes to "broaden the basis of Government." This one insists on calling to council the very subordinate chiefs whose power the Emir has been encouraged to keep in check, and whose malpractices he may have reprimanded and even punished. The native, sharp as a fox to detect such divergencies, and who is nothing if not tenacious of past quarrels, immediately seizes this opportunity. A host of charges against the Emir is lodged, old enmities break out, and the result is chaos.

The rapidity with which a native unit can be brought by a little well-meaning mal-direction, into the state of an unorganised dangerous rabble is almost incredible. Fortunately, the reverse process can be effected with almost equal rapidity, so that on the whole, calamities have been, generally speaking, avoided in the past, but on some occasions only just avoided.



AN EMIR'S FLAG BEARER.

CHAPTER IV.

PONDERATION.

INDIRECT RULE AND WHAT IT MEANS. A PLEA FOR A SETTLED
POLICY IN NIGERIA.

I HAVE described Indirect Rule as the government of natives through their own institutions, possibly modified to some extent in order to avoid practices which rightly or wrongly we consider repugnant to reason and humanity. This sounds rational enough in theory and it may be asked: "Whoever would question the feasibility of so obvious a proposal?" In practice, however, the matter is not quite so simple as might be thought. To put this policy into *real* effect means first of all that you must shut your eyes, up to a certain point, to a great many practices which, though not absolutely repugnant to humanity, are nevertheless

reprehensible to our ideas, and especially to those ideas which inform the mind of the British official. You must have patience with the liar though he lie seventy times seven; you must at times have patience with the peculator of public funds (a hard pill this to swallow); you must very generally have patience not only with the honest fool but with the slacker too. You must establish in your mind the ideas which prompted the French lady to say that surely on the Day of Judgment such and such a great man would receive special treatment. You have to make up your mind that men are not all equal before the Law and cannot be so treated. An important chief must not be made to work among a gang of felons from the common herd, even though his crimes be far blacker than any of theirs. This is difficult to do in practice.

People read without exclamations of horror, to quote from Miss Strickland's "Life of Queen Elizabeth," such passages as the following:—

"I will adventure," writes Harrington, in confidence to a friend, "to give Her Majesty five hundred pounds in money, and some pretty jewel, or garment, as you shall advise, only praying Her Majesty to further my suit with some of her learned council, which I pray you to find some proper time to move in. This, some hold as a dangerous adventure, but five and twenty manors do well warrant my trying it."

Whether the money was rejected we cannot ascertain, but that the jewel was accepted, certainly appears in the record of the gifts presented to Queen Elizabeth in the beginning of this year:—

"Item, a heart of gold, garnished with sparks of rubies and three small pearls and a little round pearl pendant, out of which heart goeth a branch of roses, red and white, wherein are two small diamonds, three small rubies, two little emeralds and two small pearls, three qtrs. di., and farthing gold weight, given by Mr. John Harrington, Esq."

Full of hopes and fears about the success of his suit, the accomplished writer notes the following resolution in his diary: "I will attend to-morrow, and leave this little poesy behind her cushion at my departure from her presence."

"When the Queen reached Temple Bar, Edward Schets Corvinus, an officer of her privy-chamber, presented Her Majesty with a jewel, containing a crapon, or loadstone, set in gold, which she, graciously accepting, said, 'It was the first gift she had received that day,' an observation which, considering

Elizabeth's constitutional thirst for presents, had in it, probably a covert tone of reproach."

The streets through which Her Majesty passed were hung with blue cloth and on one side of the way, from the Temple to St. Paul's, were marshalled the city companies with their banners; on the other, stood the lawyers and gentlemen of the Inns of Court.

"Mark the courtiers!" said Francis Bacon, who was present with his brethren of the black robe, "those who bow first to the citizens are in debt; those who bow first to us are at law." But how those unlucky wights bowed who were both at law and in debt, the English sage did not describe.

"Another intolerable grievance of Elizabeth's government was the custom of borrowing privy-seal loans, as they were called, but a more oppressive mode of taxation can scarcely be imagined. Whenever Her Majesty's ministers heard of any person who had amassed a sum of ready money they sent, to the next magistrate of the district, papers sealed with her privy-seal signifying her gracious intention of becoming his debtor to a certain amount. (*Footnote.*) Lodge, vol. ii., 356, presents a most curious instance of the transfer of a privy-seal which was sent to an unfortunate man, at Leek, in Staffordshire, who was impoverished by law-suits. From this unpromising subject, Master Richard Bagot proposes, out of justice or revenge, to transfer the royal imposition to an old usurer, who bore the appropriate cognomen of Reynard Devil (which name, civilly spelt, is Reginald Deville). 'Truly, my lord,' writes Bagot, 'a man that wanteth ability to buy a nag to follow his own causes in law, to London, pity it were to load him with the loan of any money to Her Majesty; but as for Reynard Devil, a usurer by occupation without wiff or charge, and worth £1,000, he will never do good in his country, it were a charitable deed in your Lordship to impose the privy-seal on him. He dwelleth with his brother, John Devil, at Leek, aforesaid.' Now, this country gentleman, like Cyrus with the great coat and little coat, certainly dealt more in equity than law, and the whole affair proves the absolute despotism of Elizabeth and her privy council."

"A sweet May day would have been a more appropriate season for enjoying such a visit, the details of which are thus quaintly related by Rowland Whyte:—'Her Majesty,' says he,

'is in good health ; on Thursday she dined at Kew, my Lord-keeper's house, who lately obtained of Her Majesty his suit for £100 a year, land in free farm. Her entertainment for that meal was exceedingly costly. At her first lighting, she had a fine fan, with a handle garnished with diamonds. When she was in the middle way, between the garden gate and the house, there came running towards her one with a nosegay in his hand, and delivered it to her with a very well-penned speech. It had in it a very rich jewel, with many pendants of unfirld diamonds, valued at £400 at least. After dinner, in her privy-chamber, he gave her a fair pair of virginals. In her bed-chamber, he presented her with a fine gown and juppin (petticoat), which things were pleasing to Her Highness, and to grace his Lordship the more,' adds the sly narrator, 'she, of herself, took from him a salt, a spoon and a fork of fair agate.' "



" Soon after his appointment to this office " (the presidentship of York) " Hutton complained that he could not by any solicitations, obtain a pardon for a seminary priest, whom he had converted, till, being reminded, ' that all was not done in that court for God's sake only,' he sent up twenty French crowns

in a purse of his own, as a remembrance for the poor man's pardon, which, he says, 'was thankfully accepted,' but does not record by whom."

Yet inasmuch as we should regard with horror such happenings in our own country in the present times, so do we very generally gape in amazement when we find natives practising the very same "corruption" as we now term it, as was practised by our ancestors at no very distant date.

Every school boy has read the passage in Homer where Alcinous says, "Garments for the stranger are already laid up in a polished coffer, with gold curiously wrought, and all other such gifts as the counsellors of the Phæacians bare hither. Come now, let us each of us give him a great tripod and a cauldron, and we in turn will gather goods among the people and get us recompense; for it were hard that one man should give without repayment." Yet personally I do not recollect that the school-master on any occasion read me a homily on the wickedness of this proposal.

Nevertheless, it is hard to get some officials to realise that it is right to punish by imprisonment a policeman who, when travelling, every evening demands, and is given by the villagers, free of charge, a fowl for his supper; whereas it may be crass folly so to punish a native chief travelling with perhaps a number of followers, who does exactly the same thing on an infinitely greater scale.

If it is difficult for the officer in immediate administrative charge to shut his eyes to, and even authorise, practices which stir the very depths of his nature to holy indignation, it is ten times more difficult for the higher powers, subject as they are to criticism of well-meaning but possibly ignorant persons at home to risk incurring the odium which may be acquired by allowing, and even more by authorising, European officers under their control thus to countenance practices which to the public opinion of this country are abhorrent. Nevertheless I desire to say, with all the emphasis at my command, that unless men are found with shoulders broad enough to carry such responsibilities, the British nation will inadvertently fail to discharge in a proper manner those duties towards the native races which it has itself undertaken.

Granted patience, careful study, real administrative ability, qualities which are all at the disposal of the nation, thanks to Providence, in a remarkable degree, there is no reason whatsoever why the native should not be led up the steep slope of civilisation gradually without reducing him to a state of collapse on the

journey. The process must necessarily be slower in some districts than in others, but I believe that there is one, and only one, road, however long it may be, by which we can truly assist the development of the native under our care. That path follows the natural evolution of the native race. We must lead him along that path, and not persuade or compel him to leave it and follow our path. We must teach him to be a good citizen of his own section first and he may then become a good citizen of the Empire.

By implanting in his mind a contempt for his own institutions, by persuading him or compelling him to adopt our modes of life, we divorce him from his own natural entourage and he becomes "alienated." And what have we to give him in exchange? We give him stiff fronted shirts and starched collars and clothes well cut according to our own ideas, but which certainly offend his æsthetic sense as much as they do our own, and which reduce the natural vitality of his constitution. We may even give him, in very limited numbers, the keys of learning, of art, of science. But what are all these things compared to fellowship, companionship, the society of equals, pride of race, patriotism? Of all these great essentials we deprive him when we persuade him to leave the fellowship of his kind, the frame in which Providence has set him, and to enter within the pale of our society where he must be as a stranger at the feast. If our responsibility is great in so doing, when we balance the good we can do him with such disadvantages, and the scale turns against us to an immeasurable extent, how great does our responsibility become when we consider the active harm which contact with our civilisation may cause him, nay, as example after example in the past has shown, will certainly cause him. The temptations to the vices of civilisation to which we subject him! Nature has protected him against such dangers in his own society; but we step in and throw him like a crab without a shell amongst a horde of ravening sharks.

I submit that the well-meaning people in this country who feel a very justifiable pride in the genuine interest that they show in the welfare of the native races would do well to ponder over these things and think whether when they extend hospitality, when they extend the hand of friendship, as they very often do to the native who has been inducted within the pale of our society, they may not, in point of fact, be doing him the greatest disservice imaginable. If, when they persuade a native to leave his own fold, they are not persuading him to give up what he has, without having any equivalent to give him.

“ But,” I can imagine one such saying, “ I disagree totally with your premises and therefore with your conclusions. There is no reason at all why European society should be barred to the native in the manner which you indicate. You have said that he is a man just as ourselves, why therefore should we not enter into social relations with him on lines of absolute equality ? You have yourself described, in what I consider almost too glowing colours, his mental and physical attributes. You have said that in some ways he equals and even surpasses the European.” To this I would reply : “ Are you prepared to advocate free inter-marriage of the races ? That not only your sons should marry black women, but that your daughters should marry black men ? Are you prepared to say that such unions would engender happiness, and be for the good of both races ? ” I know that some are prepared to give an affirmative answer, and with these I am not willing to discuss the matter further. The difference of standpoint is too great. I will not here go deeply into the moral and physical obstacles in the way of such unions, and will content myself with saying that in my humble opinion they are quite insurmountable ; a point of view which I think that the vast majority of European officials who have come into contact with natives and who have had the opportunity of observing the result of such unions will endorse. In support of this view it may not be inappropriate to mention that it is strongly held by a large class of our fellow countrymen (living amongst whom are to be found numerous Europeans of all nationalities)—I refer to the European population of the King’s South African Dominions. In that they are living in close juxtaposition with a large native population they are surely in a position which justifies the opinion that they will arrive at a right decision on such a point as this. So strongly do they take this view that they have recently rendered such unions unjustifiable at law ; in South Africa a marriage cannot be legally contracted by an European with a native.

Others may say, and amongst these would be a large number of European officials and certainly a large number of natives who belong to the alienated class which I have been describing, “ We admit that the native races of Africa cannot live in a state of close social contact and equality in every sense of the term with the European. But nevertheless we do not admit the truth of your premises. Why should not the class which you term ‘ alienated,’ but which we prefer to call ‘ educated,’ form communities of its own, and thus enjoy the advantages of European civilisation and of a native society, having amicable relations

but no very close contact with, European society? We do not hold with native institutions, we have got far beyond that. We respect and admire European institutions and should like them to be adopted by the native races." This is a much more reasonable proposal, I admit, but none the less is it infeasible in practice, in my opinion. In the first place I would say that the experiment has been tried; can anybody say that it has been a success? Have negro Republics with institutions based on European models been successful? I am aware that this is no argument, and that reasoning on such lines has been in the past the greatest possible drawback to the advance of the human race. Because a thing has not been it can never be; because a system has failed in the past it must necessarily fail in the future, and the corollary that because a system has been the best in the past therefore it must be the best in the future; reasoning on such lines has ever been the greatest drawback to human progress; this I admit. Nevertheless, within limits, we can to a great extent usefully employ the lessons of the past in directing our course for the future, and though it is not a conclusive argument the fact that the attempts of natives to govern themselves on European lines have been singularly unsuccessful so far should not be overlooked.

But it may be said, "There is no idea of creating independent Native States. The proposal is to rule the native by means of an European Executive with native subordinates. This Executive is, gradually in some cases, to take the place of native institutions. As individual natives become educated on European lines of thought, it will be open to them to enter the Government service. Thus in due course you will have selected natives taking a share in the government of natives." I admit that this sounds well, and but for certain facts might be the best course to pursue.

A very important point to be kept in mind is the influence of the House of Commons over the administration of the native subject races. There is a very great measure of centralisation in the government of every one of the dependent native races. All attempts to decentralise, and they have been and are frequently being made, are rendered unavailing, or restricted, by the fact that all action taken in any but the Self-Governing Colonies must be susceptible of explanation by the Government of the day to public opinion generally at home, as expressed by the House of Commons. Where the native is ruled directly the responsibility for every action taken is clearly traceable right through from the district officer or Resident who took such action through the senior officers of the Government of

the Colony up to the Secretary of State for the Colonies with whom the ultimate responsibility lies. This fact renders centralisation unavoidable; every one of these officials must be in a position to show that he has not been remiss, and further to convince persons quite unacquainted with native affairs of this. The result is what a great authority—I think I am right in saying Lord Morley—has described as “a striving after over-efficiency.” Every officer right down the service becomes over-anxious in case one of his juniors should commit, not a mistake, for such anxiety is right and proper, but what may be by any means construed as a mistake by a possibly hostile and misinformed critic. So we have a continual tendency to centralisation. A Resident makes a mistake; we promptly set up a system by which neither he nor any other Resident shall ever be in a position to make such a mistake again; quite forgetting the adage that he who never committed a mistake never committed a wise act. So gradually all power becomes more and more centralised until the man who alone is in the best position to act wisely, because he is in closest touch with the native, that is to say the Resident or District Commissioner, is deprived of all opportunity to make mistakes, which is tantamount to saying that he is deprived of all opportunity of exerting any useful initiative. To a certain extent this disadvantage is a concomitant of foreign rule over native races whatever system be adopted, but misinformed ignorant criticism has far more power thus to damage a “Directly” than an “Indirectly” ruled native community. Public opinion, guided by a natural and very sound instinct, is more likely to think that action strange to European ideas may nevertheless be justifiable if it be performed by a native authority rather than by an alien authority. Direct Rule therefore, has a tendency to centralise authority and to render it difficult to introduce measures beneficial to the natives but strange to European ideas. Indirect Rule has an exactly contrary tendency.

To turn to another point. It is true that educated natives may be safely entrusted to fill subordinate government posts and even fairly responsible posts. The experiment has been tried, and has, to a certain extent, been successful. But there are, in my opinion, fundamental objections to the adoption of the principle. In the first place it is quite possible, nay probable, that in the process of education the native will have lost touch with native ideas and native ideals. It may very well happen that he is just as much an alien to the native communities as is the European. In that case the best to be hoped for is that he will do his work not less well than does the

European on the average. Moreover, a very important point, such an educated native could only be employed in the community which bore him. I can just conceive an educated native of Kano being employed as a police officer, or assistant-district-officer in Kano Emirate, but to so employ an educated native of Lagos in Sokoto would be a blunder of inconceivable magnitude.

The number of posts which could be filled by educated natives must always remain few and must be posts which do not carry high responsibility. I will not strain the reader's capacity by asking him to imagine a native Governor of a Colony or Protectorate, but let him imagine for a moment a proposal to create an educated native of Kano Colonial Secretary of Nigeria! The proposal does not come within the bounds of practical politics. It is true that educated natives can be admitted to administrative and deliberative councils and assemblies, but, especially in the case of the Crown Colonies and Protectorates, would it be possible ever to grant them a controlling voice in such assemblies or councils? (when, that is to say, any real power of control is vested in such institutions). Why, it is not possible, in practice, to admit even unofficial Europeans in a majority into such Councils in most cases.

Under Direct Rule therefore the native, even the educated native, can never take any but a very small share in the Government. Under Indirect Rule the native can and does fill not only positions of great responsibility but the highest positions, positions which place him in the social scale on an equality with the King's representative himself.

There is yet a further reason which is daily assuming greater proportions which renders it impossible for natives and Europeans to live and work side by side. I mean considerations of hygiene. The native is immune to many tropical diseases which decimate the European. As a passive host he serves as a channel for the propagation of disease by tropical insects. The more this fact is recognised the more is it found necessary to segregate the two races. This is in the interest of both, for the proximity of an European has amply proved itself to be equally harmful to the native. European costume, European mode of life generally, European vices which the European constitution can resist, all these are deadly to the vitality and well-being of the native races.

In my experience the native cannot be ruled by the white man but he can be ruled by another native acting under the guidance of the white man. The white man can "boss about" the native, there is no doubt about that, but he being in the

minority and the native in the majority, the control thus exerted is very superficial. The native very soon learns that with the exercise of a little ingenuity he can hoodwink the white man. Moreover, the native's nervous constitution is the more robust and the white man in the act of "bossing" undergoes a process of battering highly prejudicial to his mental and bodily strength.

The difficulty is accentuated by the fact that the African is not only very adaptable, but also very much inclined by nature to assert himself, with the result that once he has thrown off his allegiance to native customs and authorities he is not at all satisfied to remain in a passive state, enjoying a freedom from all control as he does in the Directly Ruled areas, greatly to the detriment of his mind and body, but he must go out of his way to flout and insult, as far as lies in his power, the neighbouring native authorities, thus weakening their hold over their own people.



A MEMBER OF THE EMIR OF KANO'S COUNCIL.

We should do wrong if we overlooked the fact that natives have in many cases governed themselves in accordance with their own institutions in a highly successful manner in the past. "What!" I can imagine a "direct" ruler exclaiming. "The

natives successfully governed themselves! You can say this with a full knowledge of the extent of corruption existing at the courts of the native Chiefs, of the depredations of the slave raiders, of human sacrifices and all such practices which have been connected with native rule in the past? " Nevertheless, I do say so most emphatically. As I have said above malpractices and even horrors of an incredible description to us to-day have taken place in Europe in the past. It is an insufficient argument, I submit, to point out that such and such a system has led to great abuses. To my mind the value of an institution, the advisability or inadvisability of retaining it, is to be gauged in two ways only. First of all is it effective? By this I mean are the relations of the individuals of a community towards each other influenced by that institution? Secondly, is it, or is it not, capable of modification as the needs of the community in the course of succeeding generations become altered in accordance with the development of the race? My contention is that the majority of the native institutions have been effective in the past and are effective to-day and have in many cases resisted the most determined efforts of well-meaning but, in my opinion, misguided administrators. I further contend that European institutions when introduced amongst natives have proved themselves to be ineffective. In my experience where there is no native administration there is precious little administration at all. Even such ordinary functions as prevention of theft, murder and rape, and other such elementary crimes are insufficiently performed, and such higher functions as, for instance, to take the most important of all, the establishment of family discipline, are not performed at all.

Moreover, European institutions introduced amongst natives are subject to modification in the direction of meeting the changes and needs of public opinion in Europe rather than those of the natives. For instance, should public opinion in England demand that a law be placed on the statute-book rendering the playing of the game of bridge illegal, and punishable by whipping! there would be no difficulty in securing a clause in the Criminal Code prescribing the same penalties for the playing of cha-cha by the carriers in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria. As it is, if a political officer should recommend such a law estimable European officials, actually employed amongst the natives, will be found to resist the proposal: " You play your game of bridge," they say, " why should not the native have his game of cha-cha? " It has been my lot to listen to two Attorneys-General and one Chief Justice using exactly

this argument. I have heard a similar argument used in all seriousness by officials of high rank, whose opinions carried great weight in the direction of affairs, in connection with the all-important matter of legislating for the needs of natives with reference to the sale of ardent spirits to natives and to the prohibition of the manufacture of intoxicating liquors by the natives themselves. "Why should you be allowed to have your whisky and soda," I have heard it said, "and the native be deprived of his drop of gin?" "You are well sheltered and he has to face the inclemencies of the tornado. Why should not the native be allowed to brew his pot of beer?" The same wiseacres have said: "Why do you always want to be bossing the native about? Let him be." Personally I have the greatest sympathy with the principle underlying these arguments as applied to ourselves in England. Nevertheless, I find it extremely difficult to retain that calm necessary to carry on a discussion, when the interests of natives are concerned, if such arguments are brought forward. In my opinion, people who, when considering a native question, are not able to divorce their minds from premises and deductions which are applicable to their own countrymen only, are not temperamentally suited to deal with native affairs. I can only say that European institutions introduced into native communities, unless they happen, as may perchance occur, indeed very often do occur, to coincide with native institutions (in which case they are redundant) are unsuited to native needs because they are not effectual in most cases; and because, though capable of modification, such modification is not necessarily in any way suited to the needs of the natives.

It may be argued by many persons well qualified by their experience of natives and native affairs to give an opinion on the subject, that although such reasoning may be valid in respect to certain native communities, as for instance the Filane Emirates in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria or the Yoruba pagan Chieftainates of the Southern Provinces, which had advanced some way along the road of civilisation before they came into contact with the European, yet it is invalid when applied to the even greater sections of the native community which are more backward. "It is all very well," they say, "for you to talk about native institutions. You have your Emirs with their subordinate Chiefs, with their law courts administering well-established native laws and customs, their system of collecting a public revenue by well-recognised forms of taxation, their organisations for war-like purposes which they can employ also

for the execution of rudimentary works of public utility. You have in short all the machinery of Government already created and at your disposal. All you have to do is to see that this machinery is used in the proper manner. Your work is to control only, not to create. How is it possible to draw any parallel between such states and the cannibal tribes of the Bauchi hills, or the intractable and primitive denizens of the forest? They have no 'native institutions' as you call them. Here we have to create—not only control. Is it not reasonable in such cases to introduce at once the institutions and customs which have been proved to be of value in our own country?"

In the first place I do not admit, as I have said before, that any tribe which we find in being can have survived the struggle for existence through past centuries without an organisation. In my experience it is rather the difficulties thrown by the natives themselves in the way of the questioners than the absence of an organisation which has led European enquirers to suppose that any native section has no organisation. I submit that the very existence of certain abuses which must fill us with horror, such as the selection of victims for human sacrifice, or to feed the crocodile, or for sale as slaves, proves in the most incontrovertible manner that amongst the most savage and rudimentary peoples organisations did exist and were moreover remarkably effective. The individual in his thousands could not naturally have regarded with liking such institutions as those mentioned, seeing that he himself might be the next victim, he could only have tolerated them either because his body was restrained by some material force, or his ideas by some powerful mental control. Now such material force or mental control must surely and infallibly indicate the existence of some form of the machinery of government, that is to say, some form of machinery by which those whom we have described as marching at the head of the column of a nation as leaders succeed in imposing their wills upon the rest. It is a problem for patient study and administrative ability to solve what exactly that organisation is in the first place, next to use it for the purposes of developing the character and material state of the race.

Even if a tribe can be found which has no organisation, a purely hypothetical proposition in my humble opinion, then I submit that it would be far better that an European officer with the necessary qualities set to work and study the nature and the needs of that tribe, and gain a dominating influence over the minds of the more robust, physically and mentally, of its members, and that he should then, with their help, evolve

an organisation suited to their requirements ; better this, than that an European officer, backed with material force, possibly with the necessary ability but without the necessary knowledge, be directed to introduce a series of rules and customs, the result of generations of study but especially adapted for the needs of a race in a totally different stage of civilisation, probably with radically different racial characteristics. It is generally far better, I submit, to leave the tribes alone than to adopt the latter course. If it be unavoidable to coerce them materially, in order to protect their neighbours, let them at least remain uncoerced in respect to their ethics, and unmolested in their intercourse as between individuals of the same tribe.



A STREET IN KANO.

I can perhaps best illustrate the preceding remarks by describing the work of a Resident. The duties of a Resident, a term used to designate the senior officers of the Political or Administrative branch in Nigeria, placed in charge of a native unit with directions to put into effect the principles of Indirect Rule are, it may well be supposed, of a highly responsible description, they give indeed opportunities for the exertion of any degree of administrative capacity, tact, and industry. It would not be possible within the scope of this work to give a detailed account of such duties, but in order to elucidate, and I hope to enforce, the arguments which have been used to support

the system of ruling natives indirectly and through the medium of their own laws, customs and institutions, I will at least try to outline the manner in which such general principles can be, and are being in many cases, put into practice.

I would state in the first place that the Resident, as administrator, is held responsible that the wheels of Government work smoothly within his jurisdiction, which is tantamount to saying that should anything go wrong in the district he will be held accountable. Should native unrest appear for any cause; should the work of the technical Departments, such as the Public Works, Forestry, Agriculture, Mining, Postal, or any other department, be hampered in any way, such as by lack of labour, hostile attitude of the natives, scarcity of food, etc., the person who is first called upon for an explanation is the Resident. He may aptly be termed the maid-of-all-work of the Government. It rests chiefly with the Residents whether the Government is a success or the contrary, as all Government orders are conveyed to the natives by the Political officers. I use the term all orders literally, as including orders which are given by means of Laws as well as those which take a possibly more ephemeral form and are called "executive" orders. It is the Political Officers, and they only, who are in a position to see that these orders are carried out. I say that the success of the Government rests chiefly with them because it would not be correct to say that it rests only with them. The work of the Political department may be rendered abortive, either by a wrong orientation of the general policy laid down by the Government or by over centralisation, that is to say, the curtailment of the executive power of the Residents, rendering necessary a reference of too many questions to Headquarters. Such references operate adversely in two ways, first they entail great delays in the execution of orders, secondly, they lower that moral prestige of the Resident among the natives on which he must chiefly depend as his main asset to enable him to carry out his duties successfully. Given a fairly free hand however, and a rightly directed main policy, a Resident can properly be held responsible for practically all administrative matters within the area under his jurisdiction. Moreover, beyond affording him the help that a free hand and a sound policy give Headquarters can do little to assist him, though much may be done to thwart him.

I will first briefly describe the work of a Resident placed in charge of one of the more advanced groups, such as a Filane Emirate or one of the more organised Yoruba Chieftainates. In these there exists all the machinery of a small Government.

There is the Emir or Chief, in theory, and also in practice to a great extent, the fountain-head of all power and authority, his group of Councillors (the diwan of India), his District Heads who represent him, each one of whom is in administrative control of a section of natives, these in turn have under them officials termed Village-Heads who are in charge of small sections ; the native Courts of Law where native law and custom are administered and where sometimes, by arrangement with the Emirs, laws and proclamations enacted by the Government are also enforced ; the native administration police (" dogarai " as they are called in the Northern Provinces) who work under the orders of the Emir or District Heads as the case may be ; the native administration Public Works, which keeps roads in repair, constructs rough roads, builds mud buildings, and other such elementary works ; in addition sometimes native hospitals, leper camps, etc., are maintained by and at the cost of the native administration. The collection of the State revenue is in the hands of the District and Village Heads. It is exacted in the name of the Emir, one half being paid into the Government Treasury (the common fund of the Protectorate) and one half into what is generally termed in the Northern Provinces the Beit el Mal or Native Treasury. The latter is used to meet the expenses of the Native Administration which I am describing, such as the salaries of the Emir, District and Village Heads, Native Justiciary, cost of labour and material for public works, etc. Over all this machinery, over all appointments of the District Heads, Judges, etc. ; over expenditure, the Emir has control. The Resident, of course, has a great " influence " over the Emir, he tenders the advice of the Government and that advice must be taken. Further, as President of the Provincial Court the Resident wields great judicial powers for the repression of crime, and settlement of disputes, outside those of the Native Administration. In this capacity he also controls the Native Courts, being empowered to transfer any cause from those Courts to his own as he may think necessary. Sentence of two years and over, and all death sentences, passed in the Provincial Court are subject to revision at Headquarters. I may state here, in parenthesis, that the system by which judicial powers are held by administrative officers well experienced in native affairs but who have not passed certain law examinations in England—I purposely refrain from using the term " legal qualifications "—has many critics. The placing of judicial and executive powers in the hands of one man is certainly opposed to reason when the conditions are such as prevail in Europe,

among civilised races. In Africa and amongst natives the conditions are totally different. I propose, however, to go more fully into this question elsewhere and will content myself with saying here that such a combination is necessary, absolutely necessary, to the successful administration of Justice—no necessarily the Law—by us among native races.

It will be seen that the influence of the Resident placed in such a position is immense and that the power he wields for good, or harm, is immense. It may even be said to be too great and that his actions should be closely controlled by Headquarters. I admit that it is a great responsibility to place in the hands of an individual and that reference to Headquarters should be insisted upon so far as is feasible, but I hold strongly that reference to Headquarters is useful only if it be strictly limited to those questions on which persons at Headquarters are in a position to arrive at valid decisions. On all other questions the decision, for better or for worse, should be left to the Resident. In a vast number of matters, and important matters, the Resident only is in a position to give a right judgment. If he cannot do so and continually blunders then he must be replaced by another more qualified. Reference *pro forma* to Headquarters is in my humble opinion wholly mischievous in almost every case. As stated above, loss of time, an important point when large territories are under consideration, is the least evil which may result. More important is the loss of prestige on the part of the Resident in the eyes of the Emir; and even more important still is the loss of prestige on the part of the Emir in the eyes of the people. As I shall proceed to explain it is essential for the success of Indirect Rule that the European control be kept in the background and the prestige of the Native Administration be maintained. If the Emir and the Resident are together called upon to obtain sanction from a higher power before they can perform the least administrative act, or spend the smallest sum of public money, what prestige can the Emir enjoy in the eyes of the natives generally.?

The office of an Emir or great native Chief before we occupied the country conferred great dignity and power on the holder, so long as he could keep order among his subordinate Chiefs. His position was one of some delicacy however, as it was often necessary for him to restrain those very Chiefs from acts of oppression on whose support he depended to enable him to control the populace, and to defend him from any usurper who might appear or from outside invasion. This state of dependency did much to restrain the Emir himself from tyrannous

action and introduced to a certain extent the wholesome constraint of public opinion which safeguards a people from the oppression of its rulers.

The rule of some of the Emirs, as might be expected, was benign, and of some tyrannous and harmful. A great deal depended on the character of the Emir himself and more on the characters of the more important among the subordinate chiefs by whom he was surrounded. On the whole it may fairly be said that the populations under the sway of the greater Emirs and Chiefs were prosperous, well fed, and according to their ideas happy enough before the arrival of the European. At the same time those tribes and sections of natives living on the fringes of the greater units, unless they in turn were numerous and strong, were harried, wasted, and enslaved, in a very merciless manner by their stronger neighbours. It is fair to say, however, that whenever they were in a position to do so they were not slow to harry and enslave in their turn. In many ways the native communities of the larger Emirates were advancing, and slowly but surely evolving a civilisation of their own. Since the occupation of these territories we have in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria in a great measure supported the Emirs and Chiefs and to a limited extent in the Southern Provinces also. In my opinion we should continue to do so and to an ever-increasing extent.

The position of an Emir has, since the occupation, changed in one all-important feature. He is no longer subject to the influence of the public opinion of others of his kind, nor has he to trim his sails and to modify his actions accordingly. He is securely seated on his throne by a power operating from afar and quite outside all local influence. It is this foreign power only that he need propitiate in order to enable him to preserve his possessions and office. This is by no means a good thing for him or for his people and, unless the disadvantage can be made good in other directions, must operate as a drag on the moral advancement of the Chief and his subjects. The Resident in charge of the Province takes the place of the influence of public opinion as a controlling force over the Emir's actions to keep him on the right track.

The carrying out of all these duties satisfactorily gives great scope for administrative capacity on the part of the Resident. His main object, one which he must ever bear in mind, is to create a situation resembling as far as possible that which existed, or might be imagined to have existed, were a thoroughly able, well-meaning, liberal-minded Emir ruling over a unit untouched

by foreign influence. He must as far as possible keep his authority in the background and concealed, if not from the Emir and his immediate entourage, at all events from the people generally. At the same time he must be on the alert to stamp out and if possible forestall the growth of the thousand and one measures by which oppression and malpractices can be exercised. When abuses arise he must put an end to them, not by outward and visible acts of his own, generally speaking, but by causing the Emir to move in the right direction. To do this he must be well and fully informed as to all that is going on among the people, that is to say he must be in touch with the people ; he must get his knowledge at first hand ; it follows that he must be readily accessible to the common folk. At the same time he has to be on his guard lest by so doing he should encourage the people to despise their own Courts and thus impair the authority and prestige of the Emir. Should he fall into this error he will, as a first result, place the Emir in a difficult position, lessen his power over his people, and engender hostility in his breast towards the European administration ; and as a second result find himself spending hour after hour, day after day, settling the ownership of a goat, a fowl, or a native robe worth five shillings.

It may readily be supposed that this keeping in touch with the people without impairing the authority of the Emir and consequently of the whole native administration, is no easy task, and one on which any amount of administrative tact and ability can be exerted. It is generally the case that the Resident has to deal with an Emir or Chief possessed of an extremely sensitive character, not by any means always inclined to play a fair game, or averse to doing a little extortion for his personal advantage ; with a group of powerful subordinate Chiefs, each of whom is playing for his own hand, greedy of power, as jealous and sensitive as the Emir himself, and all too prone to take advantage of any opportunity given them to play off the Resident against the Emir and to commit acts of oppression if they see their way to debarring the Resident from contact with the common people ; and last, but not least, with a populace prone to vacillate between two extremes, either to bring frivolous complaints against their Chiefs or to submit without complaint to surprising exactions. It will be evident also that the Resident must keep himself in the background, resist the temptation to become a popular hero with the people (a comparatively easy thing to do), to fill the position of a big native chief, to wear, figuratively speaking, the turban of the Emir, a temptation to which human nature renders him susceptible. But, on the other hand he

must be a living force, regarded with confidence by the people as their protector in the last resort, and with respect by the Emir and his Chiefs, who must feel that they cannot throw dust in his eyes, but that at the same time they can rely on him to support them in the exercise of their legitimate authority.

Of all the qualifications necessary to a Resident, I think the first to be an inborn sympathy and liking for the native and his affairs. This may be said to be rather a trait in character, or an instinct, than a qualification. Next after this by far the most important qualification, more important far than special industry or special facility in acquiring native languages for example, is a sense of proportion. To recognise where a reform is urgently required and must be effected at any cost, or where it may be postponed, or where it may be counted on to effect itself without outside influence, and, perhaps most important of all, to be able to recognise the fact that certain reforms would be beneficial could they be effected but that it is not possible to effect them at all; to be able to arrive at a right decision on such points as these is what is chiefly required of a Resident. He must be able to decide rightly whether a native chief's first offence should be punished, or whether patience should be exerted until he has offended ten, nay twenty times—either course may be the right one, it depends entirely on circumstances. He must be able to judge not only when and how, but where his weight should be applied. It is of no avail for instance for him to waste his time forming the character of a native of mean nature and meagre capacity, who will never in any case carry other natives with him, but he must conserve his force for moulding characters naturally apt and qualified to exert a widespread influence.

Such being the principal work which the Resident is called upon to perform under the system of Indirect Rule, it will be seen that he can receive little help from outside sources, excepting in so far as he receives general instructions as to the policy adopted by the Government. Clear and distinct instructions as to the general trend of the policy, he should, I think, receive and, I need hardly add, carry out strictly. But outside interference with the *mode* of carrying out that policy, and as to what action should be taken in a special case, can rarely, if ever, be of assistance to him. It is necessary to insist on this point, even at the cost of repetition. So subtle are often the bases on which he arrives at a decision that he may sometimes find considerable difficulty in making a good case on paper for some action he may have taken, even though he feels, and subsequent events may prove, that action to have been perfectly

correct. In my humble opinion he should not be called upon for such justifications. The general well-being, or not, of the native group should be the justification or condemnation of his conduct of affairs. I recommend to any reader who desires to realise fully the difficulties and dangers which attend the attempt to control, or even to understand, the actions of a political officer in his dealings with natives on the part of officials not in direct contact with those natives to study carefully the correspondence between Lord Cromer and General Gordon in the former's book, "Modern Egypt."

To turn to the case of a Resident in charge of a unit less advanced than are most of the Filane Emirates. Here it may be thought that the Resident should mount a higher pedestal, and bulk larger in the eyes of the people. This is true in the case of very primitive peoples when the "prestige of the white man" must first be established, but when that preliminary stage is passed it is even more important for the Resident to conceal from the people that it is his hand that guides the ship than in the case of a Filane Emirate. In the primitive groups it is unavoidable that he interfere more with the tribal institutions than is the case in the more advanced sections. Their habits are more at variance with humanity and reason. So the Resident finds it necessary to interfere, and all such interference weakens the hold of the Chief or Elders of the tribe as the case may be. It is, therefore, doubly important for him, once the preliminary stage is past, to avoid the temptation of posing as a great native chief. The true measure of his success will be the respect and regard with which the populace hold their own Chiefs and Elders, and not him, combined with general good relations between the private individuals which compose the clan, and the general prosperity of the unit. This is a hard lesson to instil into the mind of many a political officer. The desire to bulk large in the eyes of a native population is a very natural temptation to fall into, and indeed it is a very laudable ambition, but where the policy of Government is to rule indirectly the political officer must be satisfied with the knowledge, locked securely in his own breast, that he is very important to the native population although they are not aware of it.

What I have written applies to every political officer in charge of a unit, not necessarily to the Resident of a Province only. The Resident of a Province would normally be in charge of the larger Emirate or group in that Province, but quite large Emirates are often placed in charge of junior officers on the Resident's staff, and in that case they have each to perform

the duties described. In some Provinces too quite junior political officers are in charge of groups of pagan tribes. Such officers have certainly the assistance of their Resident ; but as he in his turn must restrict his control to matters concerning which he has the greater knowledge, the responsibilities which they carry are often very heavy.

Under the system of Indirect Rule, the European officer, by his influence in guiding and controlling the native leaders, if his work be properly performed, can wield an enormous power for good in the destinies of the section of which he is in charge. The power thus exerted is infinitely greater in scope than any power or influence which it can be hoped that he will exert under the contrary system of Direct Rule. If the conditions were entirely altered, and, as I have said before, we could divide the natives up into groups the size of a company of soldiers and place a political officer in charge of each, and if the climate of Equatorial Africa were completely different and European officers could stay out for many years at a stretch without being compelled to break the continuity of their service every twelve or eighteen months ; if, in short, the premises were all quite different, then there might be something to say in favour of Direct Rule. But we have to take things as they are.

I assume as a postulate the influence exerted by an European official over the natives of whom he is in charge to be the most important administrative asset. The opening up of new markets and the spreading of commerce, the provision of means of transport, railways, ships, etc., all these are matters of the highest importance from the point of view of the administrator, but I submit that they are, when we are gauging our duties and responsibilities as a whole, a secondary consideration. It is our first duty, I take it, to ensure that our rule operates as an elevating and not a degrading force on the characters of those subject races, the direction of whose affairs we have assumed. We may take the son of a Kano farmer and make him a highly skilled mechanic, or even turn him into a barrister (a vocation for which the native mind alas ! is only too suited), we may enable him thus to earn what for him may be termed fabulous wealth, yet, if we have in the process damaged the mental and moral side of his character we shall have failed to discharge our first responsibility towards the man himself, and towards the community to which he belongs. It had been, I hold, far better for all concerned to have left him in a state of comparative simplicity, to bring up a family and to carry on elementary but all important work.

Granted this postulate and regarding as all important the influence of the European character over the native character, I submit that it can be more effectually exerted through Indirect Rule, as stated above, than through Direct Rule. Indeed, I do not admit that such influence can be exerted to any appreciable extent under a system of Direct Rule, in the peculiar conditions of climate and the relative numerical proportions of white man to native imposed thereby. Take a well-organised native group such as the Emirate of Kano for example, where two million persons are ruled indirectly through the native Emir and his attendant sequence of native institutions, and say that you decide that you really cannot put up any longer with their inefficiency. I grant that there are weak points, only too many. The native judges do take bribes at times and sometimes have to be punished for so doing; but did judges never take bribes in our own country? Not the Emir, for he is by now far too shrewd and knows very well which side his bread is buttered, but some of his Chiefs are spending rather larger sums on their retinues when they visit the Durbars and in the entertainment of their brother Chiefs, than we think they could possibly afford to do were their gains strictly limited to the official salaries paid by the Emir, all of which are set forth in printed estimates annually. We have reason to suppose, nay, to know, that even in this, the most advanced of the Filane Emirates, a certain amount of peculation of public funds, before they reach the Treasury, takes place, that certain native officials who to outward appearances leave nothing to be desired in respect to ability and zeal have still, concealed under their robes, a sticky patch on their palms to which public funds, bribes and other illegitimate gains are liable to attach themselves. But we know also that these phenomena have not always been confined to natives of Africa. We know that the palms are far less sticky than they were a few years ago; we confidently hope that in course of time these phenomena will become as rare as they are in our own country. But say, for purposes of argument, that we decide that we cannot put up with this any longer. "Away with all this corruption. Decentralise the Emirate; divide it up into districts, as many as your political staff will allow, put clean-minded, clean-living young Englishmen in charge of each district, then you will have a pure administration, then the European character coming into contact at many more points with the individual natives will really have an opportunity of modifying it." A charming picture, but is it in accordance with facts? I contend that it is nothing of the sort. In the first place your staff of

young Englishmen will be strictly limited by questions of finance. It is true that the funds of the native administrations thus abolished will be available and that the European staff could be increased accordingly, but this increase will not so alter the numerical proportion of white to black as to become a governing factor in the situation, or indeed a factor which can be taken into account at all. For the purposes of this argument it makes no difference whatever if you have one European for 200,000, for 100,000 or for 20,000 natives for that matter. A European officer cannot exert a personal influence on the characters of more than one hundred to two hundred natives. If the natives so affected should be, as they are in the existing state of affairs where the Native Administration is retained in full swing, in positions to influence in their turn other natives, then a political officer's influence is magnified by a natural process a thousand fold. If, on the contrary, they are not so placed, then whatever influence the political officer may have over the few with whom he can come into close contact becomes a mere drop in the bucket and is lost in the mass.

Moreover, the native very soon detects this and comes to regard the white man as a person of really very little importance, as in point of fact, placed in such circumstances, he is. Hence, you find the phenomenon, very well recognised to exist, that whereas in communities governed by native institutions the white man, *qua* white man, is regarded with great respect, in those districts where the native administrations have been swept away he is regarded as a person of no very great significance.

But even more important than the loss of any material influence of the European over the native mind is the fact that once the native institutions are overthrown; once the Native Chief or Emir, with his picturesque surroundings, his gaily caparisoned, or even gaudily dressed cortege, so dear to the native eye, and which appeals so strongly to his reason and judgment as to what is right and proper, disappear, and are replaced by the, to him, uninspiring formalities and repulsively cold and precise methods of direct European rule—once the dignified circumlocution, which in his eyes it is meet and proper should accompany all important transactions, gives place to the brief and dried formulas of British official practice, and above all once the truth dawns upon him that it lies well within his power, if he do but exert a little of the ingenuity with which nature has gifted him, to throw dust in the eyes of this once mysterious but really quite insignificant and impotent stranger sitting aloft on a pinnacle above him; to bribe, league with, intrigue with, such of his

interpreters, political agents and police as are dishonest ; to concoct successfully false accusations, to intimidate and even to poison such as are honest, and to misbehave generally under the white man's rule, in a way that he would never have dared to do under his own institutions, then indeed does a dry-rot set in—discipline goes to the wall *vis-a-vis* the higher powers. As a natural corollary, the discipline of the children *vis-a-vis* their parents, the bed-rock of all African well-being, disappears also. This disappearance of the power of the head of the household over its members is a well-established, well-recognised incontrovertible fact, deplored by Africans even more than by Europeans, in all those districts where the native administrations have been swept away



NEAR SOKOTO.

Having stated the reasons which in my opinion render Indirect Rule the only means by which we can properly discharge the immense burden and moral obligation towards native races which we have, of our own accord and without any compulsion, assumed, I would only add a plea that the highest authorities should in respect to each group come to some decision as to the

general lines on which that group should be governed and instruct the political officers accordingly. Personally, I think that by following the principles of Direct Rule we land the Natives, and ourselves, into a *cul-de-sac* from which it will be hard to escape. But at all events we march more or less in order. Where there is no policy we land in the same *impasse*, but in a state of great disorder, which it will be even more difficult to rectify.

If what I have written is true, and it is susceptible of proof, can anybody urge the abolition of the native institutions in Kano, for instance, either in a direct fashion or, worse still, by using indirect means, such as depriving the native administrations in Nigeria of the control of their share of native revenue?

Two administrative difficulties may be cited in adopting the policy of Indirect Rule in every case. It may be said: "I agree with a good many of the arguments that you have adduced in connection with Indirect Rule, but there are two obstacles which will render the adoption in many cases impossible.

"First, how are you going to introduce the many modern improvements necessary to ensure economic prosperity into districts so governed? It would be all very well if you could keep your native units detached from the rest of the world, under glass covers as it were, but to do so would seriously handicap their material prosperity. Railways, for instance, how are they to be constructed? Roads too? The native staff at the disposal of the Emir is incapable of effecting such improvements unless educated in Europe and thus denationalised, as you call it. Moreover, there are certain duties which, even were they so educated, they could not perform and for which a European staff is necessary. How are you going to get over this difficulty? Do you propose that the Native Administrations should be permitted by the protecting Government to employ, promote, and dismiss Europeans? Surely this would be inexpedient. Next, what do you propose to do with those areas which have been already for many years under Direct Rule, and where the native institutions have been already eradicated, and where it would be difficult if not impossible to resuscitate them?"

These two obstacles I freely admit are difficult to surmount. Before discussing them I would insist upon the fact that in no country has the art of Government reached such a stage of perfection as to merit the name of an exact science. All Governments have to admit the necessity of the toleration of inconsistencies in practice, of the adoption of principles apparently contrary, and the existence side by side of theories which if carried to their logical conclusions in practice would be in exact

opposition to each other. I adhere to the statement in another paragraph that ultimately the Native Administrations could be entrusted with all affairs connected with the internal administration of their territories, including the construction of large public works and the employment of Europeans where necessary. The national spirit once it has grown robust under the fostering care of a paternal Government would be strong enough to permit of natives receiving European technical education without destroying the influence of their own homes. That would be in the more or less remote future, however. Meanwhile, the wheels of progress cannot be stopped and I freely admit that it is a difficult matter to meet the problem in such a manner as to solve the requirements of modern civilisation and the imperative necessity of preserving the hold of native institutions over the minds of the natives. To a certain extent at the present stage of the development of the native institutions it is sometimes necessary to employ the methods of Direct Rule in ruling those natives who are in the employ of the Government and, to a certain extent also, those in the employ of non-official Europeans, so that it may be at times unavoidable that small areas should be administered under Direct Rule, which are dove-tailed into the mass governed by the methods of Indirect Rule. This constitutes a difficulty. The solution of this difficulty is to create native authorities to deal with some matters even in directly ruled districts. A certain duality of control will thus occur and this is regrettable, but perhaps unavoidable for a time. The difficulties in respect to small directly ruled areas existing alongside of large indirectly ruled areas need not, however, be so great as they sometimes are. To avoid them it is only necessary that the administrative officers in charge of the directly ruled enclaves should work with the officers in charge of the indirectly ruled areas, and especially that the officers in charge of the technical departments which employ large quantities of native labour should work with, not against, the policy of Indirect Rule.

It should be possible to assume that it is not necessary to state such obvious truths as these, but alas! it is necessary to state them and to insist upon them. The native has a singular knack of setting white men by the ears. To ignore this fact, disagreeable though it may be, is to shut one's eyes to a very important point, which cannot be overlooked if our administration is to be a success. To this point I shall advert again later.

With regard to those large areas which are now under Direct Rule and where the native institutions are said to have been eradicated, the solution is, I think, to resuscitate those institu-

tions. I believe that this would be a perfectly feasible thing to do, and from conversations which I have had with natives who may be said to belong to the denationalised class but whose characters and mental abilities have been strong enough to bring their judgment through the ordeal unscathed, and I am happy to say that there are many such, I gather that such a policy would meet with a very considerable measure of support among the natives themselves. How often have I after passing in review the work of some of our native clerks in government service, or transacting business with denationalised natives of the non-official classes, thought to how great an extent the man's energies and talents, character and ability were being wasted. How infinitely greater would be the services which he would render the community, how infinitely greater would be his own contentment were he filling the post of leader of native thought and development for which nature had intended him.

To turn to the question of the employment of Europeans by the Native Administrations, I agree that it is highly inexpedient at the present moment that they should be so employed. It is of no use to make any bones about it—the “prestige of the white man,” to use that hackneyed phrase, must be maintained. If the native is not imbued with a thorough respect for the white man he rapidly flies to the other extreme; further, he loses respect for the native institutions, and chaos results. This obstacle is not by any means insurmountable, however. There is no reason why the Native Administrations should not be lent European officers by the Government for the execution of public works, for instance; their costs being defrayed in bulk by the Native Administrations. Such European officers would work either as Heads of their own Departments or they would be under the general control of the Head of the corresponding Government Department. Such an arrangement would be easy of management so long as, and it is again very necessary to insist on this point, the officers of the Government generally speaking (not only administrative officers but those in the technical departments also) loyally support the Government policy of Indirect Rule. That is to say, loyally assist and support the Native Administrations. It should, again, be unnecessary to labour this point, nevertheless, it is an undoubted fact that, especially when the Government adopts a wobbling policy, there is a tendency for the officers of the technical departments whose work does not bring them into close contact with native affairs, except to a minor degree and in respect to their own employees, to regard the native institutions with a great measure

of contempt. The conditions which they consider necessary to prove the existence of a sound policy and an efficient administration are that labour, skilled and unskilled, and also food, should be plentiful and cheap. Those two conditions satisfied, they are, with rare exceptions, willing to put up with or close their eyes to, any amount of moral and physical degeneration among the natives generally ; at least, that is my experience.

There is yet a further question which may very reasonably be asked. The enquirer may say " I admit that a strong case is made out for ' Ruling Indirectly,' but I still have some doubts in my mind as to the validity of your arguments and the practicability of what you propose. You said in the beginning of this discussion that we must look to the future, even the obscure future. I now ask you to do this. What is to be the upshot ? You have said that we cannot check the development of the native population, that we can only guide—hindering or assisting it. What do you forecast as to the future of the natives if ' Ruled Indirectly' ? " To this I would reply that by means of Indirect Rule you can so allow natural conditions to exert their influence in a manner modified to meet the requirements of the native group that in due course of time it will become robust enough to stand by itself. " Then you actually mean to propose," the horrified enquirer may be imagined to say, " that we should withdraw or prepare to withdraw from the control of the magnificent Empire which we have inherited ? In short, you are a ' Little Englander'."

If by this expression is meant a person who would limit the scope of British ideals and would urge that the nation should voluntarily sacrifice the commanding position which it holds, and which enables it to extend and spread the influence of those ideals, I repudiate the charge. But I freely confess that I do not believe that a process which has been repeated so often in history that it would appear to be a natural law will not in course of time affect our rule as it has affected the rule of the empires of the past unless we take steps to avert such a disaster. I mean that I do not believe that one race can remain subject to another for an indefinite length of time. I hold strongly that fusion, extermination, or the reclamation of liberty of action must, sooner or later, be the destiny of the subject race. At the same time, I do not see why in due course, if proper use is made of native institutions, those races which are now subject should not take their places in the ranks of that group of allied nations, as they may I think rightly be called, which forms the British Empire. In this manner only, I strongly hold, can

complications of the most serious description, gravely threatening to the well being, and even to the existence, of the Empire, be avoided in the future ; only in this manner can we discharge our moral obligations to the natives, a consideration to which we are bound to give precedence over all others, and next preserve our own best interests. I see no reason whatsoever, to take the more organised Filane Emirates and Yoruba chieftainates as examples, why some of the more advanced communities should not enjoy many of the advantages of self-government to-day, and why powers equal to those wielded in respect to the management of internal and domestic affairs by the Self-Governing Colonies could not, if the policy of Indirect Rule should be consistently and intelligently applied, be granted to such units within one or two generations. In the case of those groups which are less advanced to-day the process will take longer, but that is all the difference.





THE EMIR BIDS HIS COUNCILLORS DECIDE, ONCE AND FOR ALL, WHETHER THE
WHITE MAN'S GUNS GO OFF OR NOT

CHAPTER V.

POCHADE.*

THE RESIDENT'S DILEMMA.

IN the gloomy but pleasant shade of a square house substantially built, with mud wall two feet thick and a lofty flat roof, evidently constructed originally for the use of some important native official or a relation of the Emir, sat the Resident pondering over his exceeding greatness. By a stroke of good fortune this officer found himself, though new to the country, in administrative charge of a large province of Nigeria. The district had just been taken over by the British Administration. The natives had shown no fight, and though the reigning Emir had bolted on the approach of the invading column there had been no difficulty in selecting, from an eager throng of aspirants, a suitable prince of the blood, who should reign in his stead and be himself ruled by the advice of a British Resident. The column had passed on, leaving one political officer, who is the hero of this

* The word "Pochade" in the French-English dictionary is given as meaning (a) a blow in the eye, (b) a rough sketch. It is in this latter sense that I use the word here. I need hardly add that it is not to be confused with the designation of the wild fowl known as "Poachard," indeed the first syllable should be pronounced to rhyme rather with the words "Posh" or "Tosh" than with the verb to "Poach."

tale, or you may prefer to call him the subject, a garrison of one Company of native troops, commanded by a British Captain, and a doctor.

A nice compact little administrative machine with which much may be done ; so that the Resident had every reason to ponder over his greatness. How great he was he did not himself appreciate, being, as I say, new to the country. Entirely unhampered by telegrams, at an immense distance from headquarters, his power for good or evil was greater than he himself at the time realised. However, he had glimmerings, and they gave him great satisfaction as he gazed into the brightly lit blazing hot courtyard with its red clay walls on which two very active young female lizards were scampering, flogging at each other with their tails, while a large lazy fat male with a great purple crest and yellow belly sat watching them from a comfortable corner in the shade. He suddenly remembered that the hour for luncheon had passed, and called out " Pass chop ; " this is the formula adopted throughout West Africa when calling for a meal. No effect being produced he repeated the demand, crescendo. After about the fifth time of asking a loud " Pass chop, Sah," reverberated through the building, and after a further interval of about five minutes a native servant, aged about fourteen, ran into the building with a somewhat excited air, bringing no food, however. " Whaf-for you no pass chop sooner ? " said the Resident, adopting the terrible vernacular known as " pidgin " English, invented by the servant and interpreter class on the coast of West Africa. " Chop no lib, sah—cook say he no catch fowl. sah." " Whaf-for he no catch fowl ? " said the Resident. " Cook say country man no fit to sell fowl for white man for market." " Why he no go to Emir house ? " said the Resident. " Cook say he go to Emir house, Emir's boy say he go give cook good beating—me too, sah, countryman say he go beat me." " Go beat you ? " said the Resident, his dignity already on the alert at the suggestion of any affront, direct or indirect, to himself or the white man's rule which he embodied. " Yes, sah, he say he go beat me and he go beat you, sah." " Beat ME ! " roared the Resident. " Yes, sah, he say he go beat you, he go kill you and go sell we for slaves." " Kill ME ! Why you no tell me this before ? " thundered the Resident ? " I fear you be too angry, massah," was the characteristic but unsatisfactory reply. The boy's manner was so agitated that the Resident, though not easily perturbed, thought it necessary to make immediate enquiries. Besides, he must get fowls. So he called his interpreter, who

corroborated the boy's tale, saying he had been freely cursed in the market place, and that the "talakawa" (the common herd) were undoubtedly getting very hostile. "Why did you not tell me this before?" said the Resident. "I fear you be too angry, massah," was again the most unsatisfactory but characteristic reply.

The Resident now began to think that possibly in his determination to make it clear that he was not to be trifled with, he had rather overdone it. Nobody seemed capable of summoning up enough courage to tell him anything that they thought he would not appreciate. On hearing these alarming reports he thought that it might be advisable to obtain information first hand, so, giving up all hopes of the midday fowl, he took a walk through the market place. Hitherto, he had considered it beneath his dignity to appear in an open thoroughfare unless he was mounted on a prancing steed with the Union Jack carried before him; but on this occasion he thought he would be able to get into closer touch, as it were, if he, for the moment, put himself on the same terrestrial plane as the native. He got into close touch; such close touch that he narrowly risked receiving the beating, the very idea of which for his boy had seemed to him so inconceivable. In brief, he was jostled, and though not yet able to understand the language of the natives, the facial expression of those who condescended to notice him left him no doubt regarding the great divergence of opinion which existed between them and himself as to the respect due to the representative of the Government. He hastened to his quarters and proceeded to ponder vigorously over this alarming state of affairs. He again called up his interpreter and enquired as to whether he could throw any light on the subject. The interpreter, who had now taken his courage in both hands, the fat being, as it were, in the fire, told him that the natives were very much incensed at his having occupied the house described above.

The Resident's brain was now in a highly active condition, he ceased to ponder vaguely and recalled with a series of somewhat spasmodic brain waves the events of the immediate past. When the column had arrived the senior political officer, who had now gone away, had planted him in what he considered a suitable quarter of the town. So long as the military column was camped outside the town the Emir and his people had behaved in a manner, not excessively, but quite passably, respectful towards him, and the Resident confidently looked forward to a steady improvement in this respect.

No such improvement had in point of fact occurred. He had indeed been left rather severely alone. With regard to this unsatisfactory state of affairs, he had called to council his political agent, a native called Osseni, whom he had picked up at the base, Lokoja, before starting. Osseni was a native of the town which we are describing, and should have been the very person for the job. Unfortunately, he was one of those natives who from his early days had been in contact with the European, having been a freed slave. As a matter of fact, the more he saw of the Europeans, the less he liked them. Not only did this dislike grow daily greater, but it was supplemented by the very completest contempt for the European and all his ways. European superiority he considered to be based solely on material force, and to lack all strength due to those intellectual qualities which he so admired in the leaders of Muhammadan thought. In his early youth, Osseni, though a slave, had been given, as is often done in good Muhammadan circles, an elementary Arabic education in a Koranic school. The older he became the more he thought of the Muhammadan social system and the less he thought of the white man and his ways. In Lokoja he had had occasion to observe the habits of a few of the white man's women-folk, and they disgusted him beyond all expression of words. The idea of women going about unveiled revolted his nature to the very core, and he could find no words to express what he thought of evening dress.

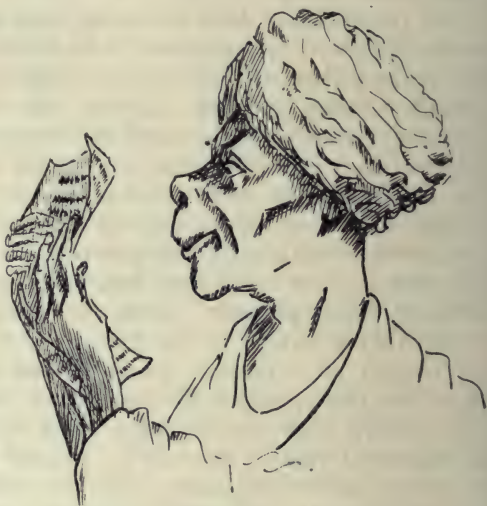
Unfortunately, there are not a few natives, and many of them Government servants, in a similar state of mind. But our Resident knew nothing of all this, and when Osseni with his splendid robes and dignified Muhammadan bearing presented himself, he engaged him, fancying himself fortunate in having secured so good a man. A Muslim, a strict teetotaler, a native of the country to which he was going; who better could he find? Osseni, however, happened to be a good Muhammadan, and did keep many of the tenets of the Koran very close to his heart. Unfortunately, he entertained the opinion, not uncommon among the Muhammadans of Africa, that not only is every Christian fair game for the Faithful, but it is the Muslim's duty to be generally a thorn in his side as far as circumstances will permit. In pursuit of this ideal, lying and treachery were, of course, quite permissible towards the infidel. Osseni had accompanied his master with the full determination to "let him down" if he saw a good profitable opportunity, thus serving the cause of his religion and incidentally himself at the same time. Paradise in the next world, money in this world, might be said to

be his motto. Now when the Resident had found that nobody paid much attention to him and had consulted Osseni as to how such an inconceivable state of affairs came to pass, Osseni had seen a very good opportunity; he knew that if there were trouble he could play fast and loose between the white man and the native to his own great benefit. So he had explained to the Resident that the compound in which he was living was altogether beneath him; that no natives of respectability ever came into such a low quarter of the town, that indeed it would be considered derogatory for them to do so. and that he as Resident should insist on the Emir furnishing him with a proper house in an aristocratic quarter.

To the Resident such advice seemed to be admirably suited to the occasion; it coincided with his own ideas exactly. He had noticed that the native chiefs had very dignified and comfortable houses, and that his own was extremely mean in appearance. Had he been more experienced he might well have observed that a neighbouring compound in which his interpreter was quartered was daily filled with gaily caparisoned squealing horses, that individuals clad in splendid robes and immense turbans were continually sitting in close conversation with Osseni, and that in such cases they had overcome their repugnance to entering these plebeian precincts. Osseni further explained to him that a certain "Dan Sarki," as the princes of the blood are termed in a Hausa Emirate, had fled together with his father on the approach of the British and that he had left a very solidly built and dignified mud mansion vacant, and all the Resident had to do was to tell the Emir that he wanted to occupy this compound. This the Resident had done, but as the Emir had not vouchsafed any immediate reply, the Resident had considered this to be a good opportunity to show the native that with a white man, and with such a white man as himself, the action is soon suited to the word, and without more ado he had directed that his goods and chattels, consisting of a bath, a uniform case, and a folding chair and table should be immediately taken, that very afternoon, into this place. That night he had slept without the uneasy feeling which had been growing upon him as to whether he was really leaving a sufficiently indelible stamp of his character on the native population, and as to whether he was really looming quite as large in the public eye as he should. The effect of this action on the native mind was immediate. He loomed all right.

The Emir and one or two of his chiefs were probably under no mistake as to whether the white man's rifles went off and

were in no way anxious to incur a collision. "Nevertheless," they thought, "if it could only be that some unforeseen and beneficent power should rid us of this pestilential fellow and his ridiculous little following of one hundred and fifty scallywags that he calls soldiers. Could it possibly be true that the white man's guns did not go off? The Mallamai* said they wouldn't; but who was to make the experiment? Supposing they did after all go off?" The Emir and his chiefs well knew that their followers would at the sight of the first drop of blood do the vanishing trick, leaving their chiefs to bear the brunt of the white man's anger. So the Emir in his dilemma did what Emirs very often do, he did nothing. He waited to see if anything would turn up. At the same time many of his entourage really believed that what the Mallamai said was true, and were as a matter of fact quite prepared to put the matter to a practical test by making some kind of demonstration in force, at a good long range from the white man's guns. Nor did they conceal this opinion at home or abroad, and soon they got the common



EMIR'S MALLAM HEARS FROM ANOTHER MALLAM THAT
THE WHITE MAN'S GUNS WILL NOT GO OFF.

people to imagine that they themselves were equally brave. Thus the matter became mooted, the young bloods becoming braver and braver the more they talked, until one of them summoned up enough courage to tell the Resident's cook that he would give him a thick ear. Another hearing this and not to be outdone had told the Resident's boy that he would not only beat him, but that he would beat and kill his master too; and so matters went very much as Osseni had hoped they would. There seemed every prospect of a riot and if Allah so willed—but Osseni hardly

* The word Mallam in Haussa designates a person who can read and write Arabic (more or less).

thought this probable—the populace did rise to a man and show a little pluck, then the garrison might be overcome; in that case Osseni had every confidence that his services in the matter would not be overlooked (to quote official phraseology), and that the Emir would “dash” him a horse of the value of ten slaves. Of course there would be trouble afterwards. The white man’s troops at the base, Lokoja, which Osseni knew all about, would soon come and put matters straight again, but by that time Osseni and his ten slaves would be well on the way to Mecca, fulfilling the one ambition of his life, a pilgrimage to the grave of the Prophet. If on the contrary, as Osseni knew would probably happen, the populace turned tail at the first sight of blood, the troops would enter the town and there would be a general *melée*, and who knows but what Osseni would possibly, indeed certainly, find a riderless horse worth ten slaves, galloping about the streets, or even overlooked, tethered by the foot in the house of one of his friends; and so he saw himself on his way to Mecca with his ten slaves whatever happened. If only some young blood would give his master, the Resident, a good beating—a thing he had often wanted to do himself, but more prudent councils had prevailed.

The Resident did not know all this, but he now had a vague suspicion that Osseni had some reason of his own to get him to move into this house, a move which had stirred up the people. He therefore dispensed with his further advice and continued to try to obtain some help from his interpreter. “What do you suppose they will do?” “Perhaps they go fight, perhaps they no go fight,” said the interpreter. “Supposing they attack this place, can we hold it?” “You catch two guns, I catch one gun, den we must go anywhere we like with these people. Den the soldier come and you burn the village.” His face glowed with pleasure at the delightful picture which his words called up, for, though he was not a treacherous rascal like Osseni, and had already risked his life in the service of the white man on more than one occasion, yet a delicious vision floated through his brain of horses worth ten slaves galloping about riderless amongst the flames, or standing neglected tethered by the foot in an empty compound. One of these might easily come his way in the confusion.

It will be seen that the Resident’s entourage was not at all disturbed at the idea of a little trouble. Not so, however, did the matter present itself to their chief. He saw that he had made a very great mistake. He, the cautious calculating man of the world, who had at last got into a position where he felt

that his hitherto quite unrecognised talents and qualities would rapidly carry him to the apex through a career of administrative glory, found that he had made at the very outset of that career a mistake which a very tyro would not have fallen into. His "patience and tact" had been overthrown by his "push" for the first time in his life, and at the very moment when they should have stood by him. Why had he been so anxious to play the strong man? He himself knew the greatness of his character. He had always read that character tells. He was comparatively young, there was no hurry. Why had he not given his character a chance to bring the world to his feet? Now what was to be done? A yawning precipice was before him. Did he see himself surrounded by a row of shining black-whiskered faces, with glittering beady eyes flashing under waving turbans? No, he did not. The faces were there, but they were not black faces. Much worse. They were white faces red with anger, red faces pale with rage; the faces of his official seniors, brass-hatted faces; the face of the senior Political Officer; worst of all, the face of his Excellency himself, which he had never seen, but which he imagined to be very awful to look upon. These were the terrible phantoms that filled that yawning chasm into which he saw himself falling. For what had he done? He was on the brink of being the cause of an unauthorised "show." A large native centre was about to revolt and to be licked into shape by three white men and a company of soldiers and that without the Governor's prior sanction being obtained. Quite a respectable "show" was about to be enacted without the presence of any senior Military Officers, without any really senior Political Officer; a show which duly authorised and properly staged might have been productive of quite a number of decorations, military and civil; of an interesting dispatch to the Secretary of State, redounding credit on his Excellency himself. What a vision! And now all this was to be lost, and he the cause. His "push" had overthrown his "tact and patience," and here was the result. How should he face his friends after this? What dreadful black mark would be put against his name in the confidential records?

His mind became more and more active. He was whirled back in imagination to the day he had landed in the country, only two months distant, but as it seemed to him suddenly an age ago. He remembered the military preparations at the base for a great column which was to extend the arm of the Government far into the interior. He thought of the rumours, joyful hopes and expectations as to who would go with the column,

of his great joy when he received official instructions to prepare to accompany the column—he, only just arrived in the country, was actually to see a “show” during his first month; how elated he had been as he shewed the precious document to some of the officers whose good fortune had already been made known to them? He remembered how surprised he had been that others, his pals, did not share his joy. From being “quite a good fellow,” “not a bad sort,” he felt himself suddenly fallen to the rank of a “blighter.” “Why on earth do they want to send a political officer with us?” he had heard the senior subaltern remark to another. “He is sure to spoil the show.” “Oh, he’s not really a bad sort of blighter,” was the reply, “then the Commandant is going, he won’t have any chance to do any harm.” “Well, I don’t know what they want to send him with us for. He ought to come up behind afterwards.” The senior Captain had debated in the Mess after dinner in his hearing, and as he thought possibly for his special edification, on administration, and the excellence of French administration specially. “What they do, and what we ought to do, is to hammer them into shape first,” he said in a loud voice, and with great emphasis. “They put the military in charge first, and they hammer them into shape,” and he thumped his fist on the table. “When they are in shape then the civilians come along, and that is all right, but if you don’t get them into shape first then you never will,” and he closed his remarks amid general approval. “It’s my belief that there will be no fighting at all on this show,” another had said, and an atmosphere of gloom prevailed. This had lasted for a few days, when suddenly a kaleidoscopic change took place, which raised him again from the “blighter” stage to that of a “not a bad sort you know.” This was caused by the appearance on the horizon of an enormous “Blighter,” a “Blighter” of such proportions as to extinguish his own existence as a blighter altogether.

News was received that the senior Political Officer was to accompany the column. That simply put the lid on. The old “Blighter” was notorious. He, always smiling rosily, invariably gave the native what he wanted. “He has always spoiled every show he ever went on,” said one old hand; “there’ll be no fighting now.” At first a settled gloom pervaded the atmosphere, which was partially expelled by a later rumour to the effect that the old “Blighter” was only going half way with the column. People stopped talking about fighting altogether, and began talking as to what shooting was to be got, and what a blessing it would be to go up country, and as to

what they would do when they came back with the column. Unexpressed hopes of promotion, medals, decorations, mentions were firmly set aside. As a matter of fact some of the senior officers were more hopeful. They knew the old "Blighter,"



THE END OF A HOT MARCH.

and though they realised that his blight was irresistible they knew him to be a kindly old man, not averse to doing a good turn to his pals. It was not as if his reputation as a "Blighter" had to be made; everybody knew he had always spoiled every show he had ever accompanied. Might it not be possible that he was now satisfied and would face a trifling loss of reputation as a "Blighter" in exchange for the immense popularity he would enjoy by playing the game for once? Alas, their hopes were ill-founded; a man once a "Blighter" is always a "Blighter." He can't help it. He's simply got to blight. No sooner had the column got near the first and most important native centre (that which was to be the scene of this drama) round which the main hopes of a show had centred, than the blight was cast. Representatives of the town had met it a day's march from the walls, and no sooner had they got into the tent of the senior officer than he "blighted." They had said that the Emir had fled, that the townspeople did not wish to resist the white man, and that the column would find food and water on its arrival. Of course the old "Blighter's" rosy smile made its appearance as he said that he was very glad to hear it, and that the townspeople might be sure of the very best treatment if they remained quietly in their homes. An officer who had been present at the interview described the whole thing as "simply sickening."

All this the Resident saw in a flash, and he thought of his fate, should he again reach headquarters, had he been guilty of committing the enormity of wasting a really good show, as he saw himself about to do. He did not know which way to turn; friendship, respect, future, all appeared to have been wrenched from his grasp. He sent away his interpreter without saying anything more, got onto his horse and rode over to the place where the soldiers were encamped, in a very dejected mood. There he found the doctor reading a copy of the "Smart Set," and the Captain, commanding the garrison, plotting a map of the route followed by the column, each in their separate huts. The Captain and the doctor occupied the opposite poles of human nature, and still they got on very well together. For the doctor's whole ambition was so to arrange his life as to have a good time and to avoid quarrels; he was a "peace-at-any-price" man. The Captain, on the contrary, was one of those the breath of whose nostrils is to command other men. At all times he took life very seriously, and at this moment even more seriously than usual. He was passing through one of those very trying periods, which are ever recurring in the life of an ambitious

official, determined to snatch promotion not only from his equals but over the heads of his seniors, when he is considered good enough to do the work but not to draw the pay of the grade above that in which he stands.

"Anything new?" said he to the Resident without looking up from his work. "No," said the Resident, "the same old thing." "When are you going to send us those fowls you promised?" said the Captain, "and that guinea-corn? My horse has not had a feed for the last three days. People have not been down to work on the fort for two days now. It is getting on very slowly. I have to report every month about it, you know. I expect you'll get hotted if you don't look out." "I'll see the Emir about it," replied the Resident. "I wish you would let me see him," said the officer; "I'd soon hammer him into shape. You'll never do any good here unless you hammer them into shape. It is a great mistake that we did not have a fight; we should have had but for that old 'Blighter.' Then they'd have been in shape. I don't suppose they'll ever get into shape now."

Just then the doctor called out in stentorian tones "I say—ha-ha—what's better than presence of mind?—ha-ha!" The Captain went on with his work. "What's better than presence of mind?—ha-ha. Absence of body, hee-hee—Pretty good," repeated the doctor. "Smart fellow who thought of that." Not a word from the Captain. "Don't you see the point?" roared the doctor. "Absence of mind, presence of body, smart fellow who thought of that." "Shut up your row," growled the Captain. While this animated conversation was going on a strange look came into the Resident's face; it may be said to have been transformed. He could not imagine how he had not thought of this before. Here was a solution of the difficulty. He would remove his body. He would go for a tour. He had intended to go shortly, he would hasten his departure. He would leave the palace he now occupied on this excellent pretext, he would take all his belongings with him. If, during his absence, the Emir should permit a native chief to occupy it, no matter. He would return to the Fort. He would open up *pourparlers* with the Emir; his tact and patience would come to the fore. His push should be under lock and key this time. He would report matters to the Governor, he would keep Headquarters well informed. He would write clear and concise reports on the situation in which his tact and patience should be evident in every sentence. If necessary an authorised "show" would take place. The Commandant might even come again himself.

His friends would regard the Resident as the cause of this good fortune. They would be promoted, decorated. The Governor would write an interesting despatch to the Secretary of State. His Excellency might even get credit for the affair. The Resident himself might be a made man. "Tactful and patient with natives, but firm," would be his glorious record. The Resident leapt onto his horse, which seemed to him to be flying as he galloped back to his ill-fated house. He would lose no time, he would leave that night. He martialled his household, packed up everything, wrote a note to the Officer, "Dear —, I'm going on a tour for about a fortnight amongst some independent pagans. Could you send me a suitable escort? I am going to travel to-night by moonlight in order to avoid the heat of the sun.—Yours, etc."



THE RESIDENT STARTING.

He had a plan, and his push helped him on this occasion. He remembered that when the old "Blighter" had been talking to the Emir shortly after his instalment, the Emir had said that he was afraid that when the white man went away the pagan tribes inhabiting the neighbouring hills might come and attack the town, as they would naturally suppose that what the white man had done they could do also, and that he would be much obliged if before going away the old "Blighter" would be so good as to settle the hash of these pagans. The Resident's brain was working at railway speed now. That was the very thing, he would visit these pagans. If they attacked him he would settle their hash. The Emir, his chiefs, and the people, would have ocular demonstration of the clearest kind that the white

man's guns did go off, and they would probably change their tone accordingly. If the pagans did not attack him the Emir and his people would at all events see that he was not afraid of what they were afraid of, and this would be so much to the good. If the worst came to the worst he would give up his house, return to the Fort, and carry on an interesting correspondence in the manner described.

He marched, with his escort of fifteen rank and file. I will not bore my readers with a description of the African scenery through which he passed; suffice it to relate that at one village where he camped a strange sight met his eyes. Walking through the compound of the village-head he found to his great surprise a well-dressed, well-nourished, not ill-featured young native woman sitting on a mat wearing on one ankle in place of a silver anklet an immense log. A deep groove had been cut in the log, the ankle inserted, and a large iron staple driven into the wood, so that she could hardly and with great difficulty by holding the log in her hands, move even the shortest distance. The plump, well-fed and happy expression of the prisoner filled him with great astonishment. He told the interpreter to inquire of the village-head who accompanied him who this woman was. "My wife," was the reply. "Why do you keep her chained up like this?" "Ban yerda da ita" ("I do not trust her") at which both the interpreter, the young woman, and the village-head laughed heartily. "How long has she been like this?" enquired the Resident. "Three years," said the husband.



"THREE YEARS!" "YES, THREE YEARS."

"Three years!" said the Resident. "Never out of this?" "Three years," was the reply. Again everybody laughed, in-

cluding the prisoner, regarding this evidently as a very amusing affair. The Resident scratched his head. His push would have prompted him to be extremely angry at this apparently gross act of cruelty, but he had learnt to mistrust the push. Tact and patience had firmly established their sway after his recent miraculous escape from calamity. "Now what had I better do?" he pondered. "Of course, I can try the man under clause 7,021 of the Criminal Code for illegal imprisonment, and give him a long term in gaol, but would any good purpose be served by such action? Should I by so doing not be administering the Law rather than Justice? It is evident that the husband conceives that he is acting well within his rights. But for the trifle of her detention the woman is apparently very well treated, rather extra well treated; so lavish a display of silver earrings and bangles I have not yet seen; moreover her hands, shoulders and arms are bluish with indigo, which shows that she is in the habit of wearing the most expensive Kano cloth, the dye of which is guaranteed to come off on the wearer; she evidently gets plenty of food and she herself treats her imprisonment as a joke, as do her husband and his neighbours. Strange ideas of humour these natives have." After a few profound and statesmanlike cogitations such as these, and a little further pondering, the Resident decided upon the action he would take; he would do nothing for the present. He would "wait and see." Great statesmen always "waited and saw" nowadays. He would speak to the Emir, he would enquire whether there were a great many more such cases, he would go deeply into the question of the domestic discipline of the native family, he would try and remember some of the English history he had learned at school. The Married Woman's Property Act he knew had been passed within comparatively recent years in England. He had dim recollections that at some period not very remote fathers were permitted to take disciplinary measures within the limits of their own families; he would even write a concise, interesting report on the case and ask his Excellency's advice. A good move this, he thought. To set the reader's mind at rest I may add that the Emir when consulted stated that it was not a very usual occurrence, but that the husband was well within his rights, so long as he did not ill-treat his wife further. The upshot of the matter was that an Emir's messenger carried a mandate for the release of the woman, but whether by this interference the Resident had allowed a ray of the light of British justice to illuminate that humble household, or whether on the contrary by putting his oar in he broke up what had been heretofore a

perfectly contented and well-ordered family, he wondered at the time and has been wondering ever since.

In a few days he reached the outskirts of the Emir's dominions, within a short march of the hills in which the redoubtable pagans resided. Until he reached the last town the people had been extremely glad to hear that he was going to ascend the hills. "Either his guns do not go off, and," they thought, "he and his soldiers will be killed, and that will make one white man less—a good thing; or his guns do go off, and in that case he will kill a lot of those detestable pagans who are continually kidnapping our children or seizing our cattle, and this too will be a good thing." He noticed that whereas the villages more distant from the hills were all to a certain extent fortified against attack, yet this much larger and wealthier village took no such precautions, and appeared to have no fear of a raid from the hills. This he found was to be attributed to the fact that the Ardo, or village-head, and the people of the latter town, were hand-in-glove with the pagans, and in point of fact paid the pagans a certain tribute annually to secure immunity from attack. They would further, being able to penetrate without suspicion all over the Emir's territories in the neighbourhood, keep the pagans informed as to the movements of caravans and herds of cattle, receiving in return a portion of the booty captured. Round the fringe of every Filane Emirate, where those territories abutted on unconquered pagans, such practices were prevailing when the country was first occupied by the British. Our Resident's honest soul was scandalised at such inconceivable treachery and double-dealing, and he began thinking of suitable sections of the Criminal Code, but again he mistrusted his push, and hazy recollections of certain passages in English history anent the Lords of the Border Marches floated through his mind. So much so that he determined to write by the first mail for Green's "Short History of the English People," and, pending a perusal thereof, to suspend passing moral judgments, whatever he might do in respect to material judgments, until he had refreshed his memory.

The Ardo of the town kept a Mallam by whose advice he was generally guided when anything strange or unexpected turned up, and this Mallam had told him that without any possible shadow of doubt the white man's guns would not go off, so that if he went up into the hills he would certainly meet with the fate which



Allah had plainly reserved for him. The Ardo accordingly put no obstacles in the way of the little expedition and willingly supplied the necessary guides. The guides themselves, however, did not place much faith in what the Mallam said. Supposing the white man's guns did go off, he would then kill a few of the pagans, the rest would run away from the field of battle, then come back next day and make their peace with the white man. The pagan chief would explain that in point of fact he himself had stayed awake at nights yearning for the sight of the white man, and that had he only known the Resident was coming he would have killed the fatted calf in his honour; he would then expatiate on the difficulties of his position, how hard it was to maintain discipline among his young men, citing as a proof the totally unprovoked attack they had made, without his knowledge or concurrence, on his best friend, the white man, whose advent, so long delayed, had been the one hope of his life. The white man would then go away, and the guides, who would of course have been seen in his train, would be murdered on the first opportunity by the boys of the pagan chief.

The Resident, however, did not quite appreciate these little details and great was his indignation when, shortly after leaving the town, the two guides were suddenly found to be missing, one having said he would go back and fetch a stick he had forgotten in the town, and the other that his dog had gone into the bush and that he really must go and find it. However, the way could hardly be missed, as the hills formed an immense wedge of granite cast upon the plain and stood up like a wall in front of him, flanked here and there by jagged needles and sugar loaves of granite, as it were the battlements of some enormous castle. At the foot of the hills, and sometimes resting in crannies half-way up, he soon saw the red walls of innumerable mud-huts in which lived the hill-men. When approaching the first village his ears were assailed by strange musical sounds. Thinking that this might be the regimental band of an attacking force, he was about to put himself into a state of defence when the native sergeant who was in command of his small escort, said "I no think they go fight massah. I think this be peace palaver," and so it turned out to be, for in a short time three splendid specimens of savage humanity came running along the path towards him, in no ways abashed at the sight of the soldiers or their guns, shaking their sticks at him (they carried no weapons), by way of salute. These explained that the headman of the nearest group was waiting to

receive him a short way on. The Resident did not know whether to be pleased or annoyed. He was extremely loth to kill the natives, as he knew he would have to do if attacked ; at the same time if he were not attacked how could he give the Emir convincing proof that rifles do go off, and earn the reputation and popularity which he expected he would gain if he could return to the capital in the guise of a successful general ? That unfortunate hill-men should die to get him out of a scrape went against the grain. He consoled himself, however, with the idea that quite independently of any prior acts of his these hill-pagans would have had to be visited. They knew nothing about affairs at the Filane capital, and nothing that he had done there would influence them in attacking or not attacking his party and so he decided that he could with a clear conscience hope that they would attack, so long as he did everything within his power to effect a peaceful penetration of their district. So far everything was peaceful.

He camped at the first village, he gave the Elders a concise and lucid sketch of the British Constitution, told them all about the King, and the Governor and himself, and how happy they would be if they did everything he told them to do, and how they must cease from pillaging other people's cattle, children, wives, etc., mustn't have slaves, how in turn the Filane would no longer raid them and capture their children and wives as slaves, and how in short the millennium had just dawned for them. The Chiefs and Elders listened to his discourse with the greatest gravity and according to the interpreter made the brief but expressive comment : " What you say be good too much." Everything seemed to be going very smoothly ; the only matter which at all disturbed the Resident was that the pagans did not appear to be oppressed by any feelings of awe at the sight of the white man. This was not in accordance with what the Resident had read on the subject. The awe-inspiring power of the white man had been the theme of many books on African travel, which he had duly perused before taking up his post. The countenances of the Elders and Chiefs were certainly grave, but they seemed to be looking at him from a distance, and through him, and past him. He did not find that the stern glance of the white man's eye, which he had always read will daunt the tiger and cause the lion to pause, had any effect on them whatsoever. They simply looked at him with a fixed and stony stare. He did not realise at the time that this was partly due to the fact that he had arrived at the village just after a harvest carousal, and that probably some of the Chiefs and Elders did not see him

at all, while others saw two white men where there was only one. The common people seemed friendly enough, but almost too friendly and interested. They sat perched on rocks, watching all his movements and those of his soldiers, with expressions of amused interest, as though he were a travelling circus rather than—well, what he knew himself to be.



THE PAGANS ON THE WAY OUT.

From this village he sent several of the pagans ahead of him with instructions to explain to the other villages what a great and good man the white man was, and how they had seen him and admired him; thus doing all he could to prevent misunderstandings. Still at the bottom of his heart he hoped that somebody would attack him. He was not disappointed. The next day the two guides supplied by the village-head vanished into thin air before he had gone more than a mile or two. The next village he came to was deserted. A short way on the road entered a gorge down which passed a stream of very welcome water. Here he halted, as the sun shining on masses of granite uncovered by any protecting vegetation, had turned the valley into a veritable furnace. Having rested his soldiers he was just about to proceed when the pagans made the valley resound with their battle-cries. What with human throats issuing blood-curdling yells, innumerable tom-toms, the beating of huge heavy drums made out of hollow trees, and shrill skirling from every kind of pipe and horn, the din in the enclosed space was incredible. The soldiers' faces, however, so far from being downcast glistened with pleasure; visions of fat rams, sheep and goats roasted in tempting bits over the camp-fire, or roasted whole, floated before their eyes. The pagans having chosen the worst possible

moment for the attack, that is to say when the small body of troops was in a cluster and not spread along the line of march, proceeded to make every strategic and tactical blunder possible in the circumstances. The majority of them collected at what to them was a great distance, but well within range of a reasonably good marksman, that is to say about five hundred yards off, waiting to see what would happen, and making what they conceived to be the necessary noise. A very small party of the



THE PAGANS ON THE RETURN JOURNEY.

bolder spirits came forward to attack, not, as they might have done to some effect, creeping along under cover from boulder to boulder until they got to within arrow range, when they might easily have done some damage, for an arrow will carry nicely two hundred yards, but charging together across a flat turtle-back of granite. To the great disgust of the native sergeant, the Resident would not allow the troops to fire on the main body but only on the storming party. Of them three fell at the first volley, one killed outright and two wounded. At the sight of this the rest turned tail, running back towards the main body, which in an incredibly short time had melted away. The whole encounter did not last more than about ten minutes.

During the next couple of days the chiefs duly arrived, expressed their joy at seeing a white man at last, and made numerous complaints against their Filane neighbours. As for the small matter of the attack on the Resident they appeared to think little of it except in as far as it showed how much they required the white man's help to enable them control the hot-blooded young fire-eaters of the tribe.

The Resident returned in a highly elated frame of mind, with a clear conscience, and a self-respect daily and hourly

increasing as he passed through the towns on the way to the capital, receiving the ovations of a successful general at every village centre. A day's march from the capital a handful of superbly dressed mounted members of the Emir's household, headed by the chief eunuch on a magnificent black charger, rode into his camp. The messenger reported that the Emir



"THE WORST OF POLYGAMY."

apologised for not having accompanied the Resident to see him off when he left the capital. This he explained in two different and contradictory statements made in one breath. In the first place he said that the Emir did not know that the Resident was going, in the second place the Emir "Ya sha magani"—had taken medicine, and this had confined him to his house. The Resident was too well pleased to boggle about such discrepancies, however. The next morning the Emir himself, with a large retinue mounted on squealing horses, met him at the gates of the town and personally conducted him to the fateful house which had so nearly been his undoing.

Fowls were plentiful that day in the Resident's household, and he was not kept waiting for his lunch. "Den dey fear too much," said the interpreter. Sitting in the same chair, in the same mud-house where we found him, he pondered over the inscrutable decrees of Providence which, using him as a humble instrument, had brought these people within the fold of civilisation in a peaceable manner.



THE EMIR DESPATCHES A SECRET MESSAGE.

CHAPTER VI.

POCHADE.

THE ANATOMY OF LYING.

THE art of lying, extensively practised in all epochs, reached a very high state of perfection among the natives of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria (or Northern Nigeria as the territory used to be called) during the first decade of the present century.

The fact that a large area (some 250,000 square miles), containing some ten million natives, had just been occupied, and that an attempt was being made to administer it with a handful of white political officers, was in itself a favourable circumstance. The natives very naturally thought that if they launched a sufficient number of lies they could prevent their conquerors from getting to know anything about them and, perchance, so confuse their minds that they would give up the attempt in disgust and go away. It was indeed some years before the idea that the white man's stay in the country would be very brief (an idea studiously circulated by the "Mallamai," as natives proficient in the Arabic script are termed in Haussa), could be eradicated from the minds of the natives of all classes. They would, when talking to each other, compare the white man with the locust; a terrible visitation indeed, but one of rare occurrence and of short duration. This notion is not even yet eradicated, but lingers on amongst the more primitive tribes that occupy the hills, and so late as the year 1914 manifested itself in some outlying districts, when shortage of staff and the consequent closing of some of the less important political offices lent some slight colour to the suggestion.

The general confusion which must necessarily take place when a native race first comes under the domination of a stranger; the prohibition of certain tribal customs which natives have come to regard as necessary to their existence; the possible breaking down of the rules and barriers which in the past have regulated the relations of the various classes to each other, keeping each in its proper place; the chances which arise for the re-opening of long settled quarrels, for the paying off of old scores, and the satisfaction of long cherished revenges, all this creates an atmosphere highly favourable to the development of the art of lying.

The introduction of direct taxation, taking as it did the form of a levy on the income of each individual, rendered necessary a strict enquiry on the part of the political assessing officers into the exact material circumstances of the tribe, the village, and even of the individual himself. Only the closest inquisition, often carried out by the political officers themselves, in counting up the heads, male and female, adults and children, huts, compounds, sheep, goats, cattle, beehives, etc., could reveal the actual wealth of a town or village. When it is remembered that there might perhaps be one officer only for one hundred to three hundred thousand inhabitants, it will be realised that the task of personal inspection would often lie immeasurably beyond his powers, and that he would have to rely in the main

on statements given to him by the native village headmen. Even the British citizen has been known to resist exactions made in the interests of the Treasury, and we can hardly blame the native if he too did not always realise the necessity of sacrificing his own to the public interests.

It will be readily recognised that the soil and atmosphere were favourable to the growth of the art of lying, and it need be cause for no surprise that its cultivation, practised by a people not without a natural turn and aptitude in this direction, reached a state of the highest possible perfection, and produced some very fine results.



EXPERIENCED COUNCILLORS SETTLING WHAT THE EMIR
SHALL SAY TO THE GOVERNOR.

Moreover, the phenomena of lying assumed certain aspects which we in England are not accustomed to connect with it. In the simpler and less complex society in which we live we can divide people into two groups, those who tell the truth and those who lie, as we separate sheep from goats. Though

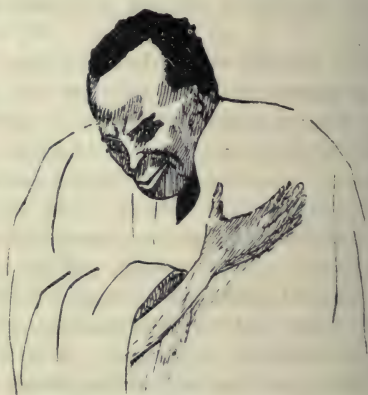
metamorphoses do take place in an unexpected manner at times, the sheep becoming goats and the goats sheep, it is safe on the whole to say that the truth teller is a sheep and a good man, and the liar a goat and a bad man. But in Nigeria matters were not at all so simple. To take a case in point: a village head imbued with the idea that the white man is a locust and a plague, confident that he will soon go away or be driven out by the neighbouring Filane Emir, and regarding him as a negligible quantity, out of sheer contempt of the white man's powers does not bother to concoct a false return as to the taxable capacity of his village. He tells the abrupt truth. Perhaps a few inaccuracies may creep in, but these would be due to sheer indolence on his part, and he cannot be given any credit for them. He does not even do the officer the compliment of spending any time or trouble preparing an apparently true but completely misleading set of figures. Now, can anybody say that the telling of the truth in such circumstances as these is to be encouraged, or that such a village head is to be supported, or even retained

in any responsible office? On the contrary, he certainly belongs to a dangerous class. He would probably lead a rising against the white man if he got a chance.

The existence of such paradoxes caused a sister art to that of lying to spring up, which may aptly be termed the anatomy of lies and lying. Through constant practice the political staff carried this art to so high a state of perfection that it reached such a degree of exactitude as almost to merit the designation of a "science." In experienced hands the origin, motive, and scope of any given lie came to be gauged with a precision which could rightly be described as mathematical. As to the detection of a lie, this comparatively simple process is soon acquired. With a little practice on a good field, where everybody, including his own native staff, is continually performing the most complicated figures and evolutions known to the art of lying, a political officer gets to recognise the lie and the half truth without being aware of the fact. He no more uses any mental process in segregating a lie than he does in forming a letter when he is writing. It becomes a mechanical process with him.

But the analysis of a lie is a far more complicated matter. The differentiation between lies, exaggerations and inaccuracies from the truth is not so difficult. But the detection of the *motive* which prompted the lie—there lies the crux. As I have said, in some cases political officers, after long experience, and acting on rules deduced from thousands of observed cases, not infrequently acquired the power of accurate analysis to an extraordinary degree. In other cases, however, as might be expected when a lower stage of proficiency had been reached, a wrong analysis might be made; some motive other than the true one might be attributed to a lie, and great injustice, and even hardship, result.

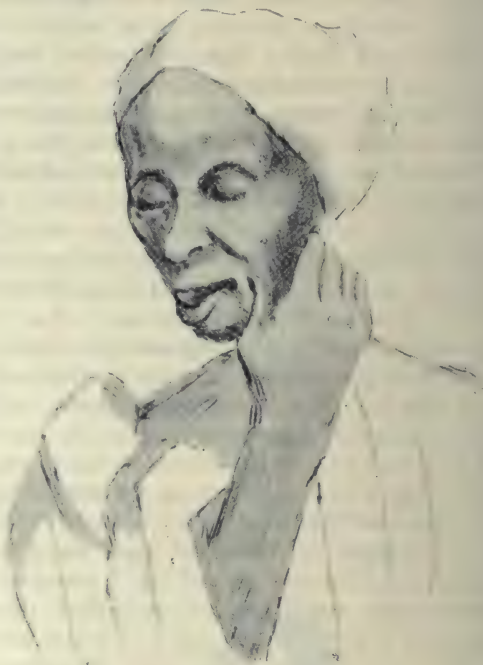
In the case which we have just quoted we assumed that the motive underlying the lie was a bad one. Let us now suppose another case where the village head has supplied the political officer with a completely false return as to the taxable capacity of the village, and let us analyse his lie and see what might



A VILLAGE HEAD IN DIFFICULTIES.

have been the underlying motive. The village head may be a cunning, able, unscrupulous fellow, quite capable of lying to deceive the white man and of oppressing his own people at the same time. He may have made this return with the full intention of collecting the taxes authorised in accordance with the correct return in his possession and up his sleeve, and having done so to put the difference, the balance over after paying up the amount appointed by the political officer as due to the Government, into his own pocket. Now, such a village head might be altogether bad or not. It is certainly to be said in his favour that he has at all events shown some initiative, some intelligence, some forethought. Selfish perhaps he is, but still the fact that he has taken all this trouble to concoct a completely false set of figures shows that he has industry. Now, the political officer, as he is responsible for the appointment and retention in their posts of efficient village heads, has to decide in his mind what weight he will give to such favourable considerations in arriving at a right decision as to the value of this particular village head. What is he to do? On what lines should his further analysis proceed? The reply is obvious. The return is inaccurate. The village head has shown some initiative, some ability, some industry in preparing it. The proper test of his value as a village head will be "has he exhibited those qualities in a sufficiently marked degree to counteract the flaw in his character which the fact that he is a liar denotes? Is the false return sufficiently false? Is it a crude lie, or a half truth sufficiently plausible to deceive an inexperienced political officer during his first tour in the country?" If it is, then there are points about that village head which render his retention in office expedient. Remove the motive which prompted the lie, the flaw in his character will disappear and you will have a useful government servant. It may even be that the return is concocted in so clever and cunning a manner, is so full of half truths capable of plausible explanations, and especially the mode of presentation of the return may be so skilful, the replies to the questions arising out of it given in so prompt and engaging a manner, and with such apparent candour and truth, that even an experienced political officer may find himself arriving at a totally wrong assessment as the result, and be surprised, when he comes to carry out a personal inquisition, that he could be so taken in. In such a case he will, of course, immediately note that he has had to do with a village head of exceptional diplomatic and administrative powers. Such a man he will know is capable of filling positions of responsibility and trust.

The rendition of a completely false return may therefore not be any proof whatsoever of the unsuitability of a village head for employment, even when the motive is a purely selfish one; how much less then should we allow ourselves to be influenced by our prejudices in respect to lying when we come across a case of skilful deliberate lying actuated by the highest altruistic motives. Such cases quite frequently occur. The village head is regarded as the protector of the village. He is there to guide the ignorant villagers, to safeguard their interests, to be the scapegoat for their delinquencies. If he fulfils these obligations well he comes to be regarded with great affection by the villagers, and he in turn regards them as his own family. On the horizon appears the terrifying form of the political officer on tour carrying out a village to village assessment. The village head may probably never have seen a white man. He regards him with the greatest possible dislike and fear. In respect to the taxes



WHAT SHALL HE SAY TO THE WHITE MAN?

demand in former years by the Emirs, and the additional exactions of their slaves, he has come to know pretty well how he stands. He has successfully protected the villagers, to such a degree as to render life tolerable to them, up to the present. But this white man, what is he to say to him? He has given orders that the village head shall prepare a complete list of males, females, sheep, goats, etc.; was ever such an inquisition made? However, the village head thinks it better to carry out orders and prepares a completely false return, but not with any selfish motive. If he should succeed in hoodwinking the white man,

he will not collect any additional amount on his own account, but will allow the villagers to enjoy any advantages derived from his successfully presented concoction. Here is a nice problem in the analysis of lying for the political officer to solve. Now, is this man lying for the same motives as the selfish individual we have just been considering, or is he an altruist ready to sacrifice himself for the good of his people? for penalties, including imprisonment, the village head has been informed, may be imposed for rendering a false return. Even in the case of the individual prompted by a purely selfish motive we have seen that much may be said to prove that, although a liar, he may be a useful member of society; how much more in the case of



EMIR'S MESSENGER INSTRUCTING VILLAGE HEAD AS TO WHAT HE SHOULD NOT SAY.

this high-minded individual? The guide in this case must be again, I think, the ability displayed in the concoction of the false return and the plausibility of its presentation. Some political officers would, I know, differ from me on this point, arguing that the fact that the man had displayed a noble lack of self-interest and was willing to sacrifice himself for his people, should be considered to discount even gross lack of skill in the concoction of his lies and that a man who lies clumsily but with a public-spirited motive is more deserving than the more skilful

liar whose actions are governed by selfish motives. I will not labour this point.

To take another case. Supposing the village head, in presenting his false return, has not been acting on his own initiative at all, but has simply carried out the orders given to him by one of the Emir's messengers, who has been sent to anticipate the political officer's visit by about twenty-four hours at each village; how are we to view his conduct? Is he to be considered as an admirably disciplined individual who can be depended upon to obey the orders of his chief, even at the risk of loss of liberty in the white man's gaol? Or is he to be considered as lacking all backbone and a ready prey to any rascal who comes along? For the Emir's messenger may very well have conveyed not the Emir's message but some lying invention of his own with a view to sharing any profit which may result in the successful hoodwinking of the white man. Many other cases will, no doubt, present themselves to the mind of the imaginative reader. For instance, how about the village head who has likes and dislikes, who protects one section of the villagers and tells plausible lies on their behalf, but who blurts out the truth with respect to others who are his enemies? And so on and so on, instances could be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

I think I have said enough to show that a great many points are to be considered in arriving at the proper valuation of a lie when uttered by a village head. Before leaving this subject I would add that a very safe guide as to whether the lie has been successfully presented, and the political officer led astray in a satisfactory manner, is to be found in the demeanour of the village head at his final parting interview with the white man. Should he wear a guilty, hang-dog, depressed air it may very fairly safely



VILLAGE HEADS WHO HAVE INADVERTENTLY TOLD THE TRUTH.

be assumed that he has been telling the truth. Should he, however, possess an upright carriage, look you straight between the eyes as one who has nothing to fear, you may be sure that you have been successfully humbugged. Village heads who have been found out and sentenced to imprisonment invariably accept their sentences without depression of spirits,

their clear consciences and the knowledge that they have done their best, even though unsuccessfully, enables them to face the hardships of prison with cheerfulness. *Mens conscia recti.*

To tell palpable lies, always, the whole time, and on every possible occasion, often without any motive, is not to practise the art of lying. In Nigeria there is a section of natives known as the "Cattle-Filane." They are nomad herdsmen and have little in common with the other natives, except in so far as they strongly object to paying the 1s. 6d. per head, which is the tax on cattle demanded by Government, known locally as "Jangali." Living with their herds a great deal in the uninhabited and remote districts they are an extremely picturesque people. Being of Semitic origin, they are quite different to the negro, resembling in their appearance and mode of life pictures and descriptions relating to Biblical times. Of them David might well have said in his haste "All men are liars." Members of this tribe do not practise the art of lying, they refrain from speaking the



"CATTLE! YES, I HAVE ONE COW; IT IS SICK."

truth, simply. It is as though some aged Nestor had laid down for the future guidance of his people that they should speak as little as possible, and when they did speak they should never in any circumstances whatsoever allow the truth to pass their lips. I have known the possessor of hundreds and even thousands of head of cattle not only to deny such possession but also the very existence of such an animal on the face of the earth. When pressed, to admit that he had heard of such animals running wild, when further pressed, to admit that he had seen such animals, when further pressed, to admit that he had friends

who owned cattle, when further pressed again, to admit that he had one cow in his possession, bought from a friend (but not yet paid for), for the sake of its milk which was given to one of his children, who lay at the point of death. So, through the whole of a long interview, a Cattle-Filane will lie. I confess his manner is often pleasant and plausible, and he makes his lying statements with emphasis and decision, but he gives no key to the political officer as to his character, because he habitually lies without motive. Of course a man who never tells the truth has an undue advantage in the presentation of a lie *viva voce* over a man who is accustomed to interlard his lies with true



"SANS PEUR ET SANS REPROCHE," KNOWN NEVER TO HAVE SPOKEN THE TRUTH.

statements, as he is always in practice, with his eye well in as it were. But so crude and palpable are the Cattle-Filane's lies that they deceive nobody. What is worse, the political officer feels all the time that the Filane realises that nobody is going to believe anything he says. Thus a passage of lies, so valuable as an index of character in the case of other natives, has no value whatsoever

in the case of Cattle-Filane, or "Borroroje," as they are termed in Hausa. As a result, this tribe remains to this day a sealed book to us. We know only one thing certain about them, that is that the returns in our records as to the numbers of their cattle are all wrong.

The art of lying does not consist then in simply just telling lies. If it did, then all men could practise the art successfully. No; it is something much more subtle and complicated. The art of lying consists, if you will study the works of the great artists, of reducing the mind of the recipient to a state of bewilderment. Once this is done he will be prepared to believe an untruth

to be a truth, or *vice versa*, just as you may wish him to do. It is of little value planting in his mind an inaccurate fact or a false conviction if he thinks that he has been told the truth. He will go away with a mind "in being" as it were, slightly impaired by the retention of a radically mistaken idea in respect to facts, but impaired only in that one direction, and fully capable of action in all other directions; even capable of recovering itself and ejecting the intruder.

No, the art of lying has a far greater scope than this, and can induce results of a more enduring and far-reaching nature. The art lies in so mixing up absolute falsehood with truths, half truths, appropriate inaccuracies, and exaggerations, as to reduce the mind of the recipient to such a condition of bewilderment and bemusement as to render it incapable, for at least some time, of any action at all outside itself. The recipient should be left with the impression that he has heard the truth, but the disagreeable notion that at least a portion of what he has heard is not or may not be true. His mind will then feed upon itself and will thus be reduced to a state of inactivity with regard to all other matters for an appreciable space of time. Not knowing exactly where the truth begins or where the falsehood ends; in doubt as to whether there is any falsehood at all, but with a conviction that there must be some somewhere, the mind of the recipient will lose all power of recovering itself by verifying facts, for it will not know where to begin, or which fact to set about verifying.

It will readily be seen that to attain proficiency in the art of lying the habit of strict accuracy of statement must be acquired and constantly practised. Thus only can the delicate shades of the half truth be secured. It is the half truth on which the most expert performers chiefly depend to enable the virulent falsehood to take effect. Between the most crude processes as practised by the Cattle-Filane in abstaining from the truth altogether, and the art of lying as presented by the well-informed Filane, village or district head, there is all the difference that exists between a geometric pattern for a wall paper traced with rule and compass and the delicate delineation of sunlight on mountain mist and sea by a Turner.

Many of the Emirs are great and skilful performers. Of course, occupying the positions they do, having to engage in amicable relations with the highest European officials and generally to conserve an atmosphere of *haute diplomatie* around them, it is necessary that they should be very expert in the art of polite lying. It is generally recognised that to enable

them to discharge these important duties successfully it is essential for them to keep their hands in by lying often and a good deal and on a large variety of subjects. So it is of little or no value for a political officer to waste his time, except by way of pastime or practice, in the analysis of an Emir's lies. The same does not apply, however, to their "entowage,"* especially the messengers employed as intermediaries between them and the Residents. In hardly any circumstances can such a messenger be held responsible for the lie itself; his duties



THE "ENTOWAGE."

and responsibilities end with the presentation of the lie. In this latter branch of the art he must be proficient to enable him to discharge his duties at all. Not but what he may at times exhibit powers of initiative and creation in a manner highly indicative of ability. For instance, an

* I take the liberty of introducing this word to my readers in place of the more common expression "entourage." In point of fact it was invented by the native clerk who typed these pages and who throughout thus misread the manuscript. I think it will be agreed that it far surpasses the original in describing and evoking a mental picture of a native Chief moving about with a number of gaily clad followers in tow.

Emir's retainer brings a message to the Resident to the effect that all the horses in the Emirate died last week, and that the Emir therefore regrets that he cannot meet the request of the Government in providing horses for the use of the Mounted Infantry. But that one horse escaped, a favourite horse of the Emir's, and that it, although ill, is entirely at the service of the Resident if he so desires. Now, the presentation of such a lie as this, to a possibly short-tempered Resident, it may well be supposed is an operation requiring delicacy of touch on the part of the messenger. On the receipt of such a message, in addition to keeping his temper, the Resident is faced with a host of interesting and important contingencies. He has to decide in his mind for certain as to whether the last portion of the message regarding the Emir's favourite horse was furnished by the Emir himself, or invented by the Emir's messenger on the road between the Emir's palace and the Residency. In the former case no special attention need be paid to it. Such a graceful flourish is, of course, an easy matter



ALL THE HORSES HAVE DIED !

for a practised performer, which the Emir must be, or he would never have attained the high and responsible position which he enjoys. But if, on the contrary, the Emir in point of fact simply said to the messenger: "Oh, go and tell the white man all the horses are dead, and get out of my sight," and the messenger thought out the "favourite horse" addition on the road, then indeed he is, or should be, especially noted for promotion to a post of administrative responsibility. It is evident that he possesses a feeling for proportion, for what the white man has a right to

expect, for the means by which satisfactory relations can be established and maintained between individuals; a feeling in short, for those subtleties which it is essential that the holder of a responsible administrative post should possess.

| I have said that the atmosphere in the early days of the Protectorate was peculiarly favourable to the practice of the art of lying, and its sister art, or, as I prefer to call it, science of analysing Lies. Gradually, however, I am told, a change is taking place, rendering the practice of those two branches of human activity more difficult and indeed less useful. Life is becoming more simple, and approaching more to European conditions. Facts, hard facts, are becoming more well known. The wells in which truth could so successfully hide herself are becoming fewer and shallower. This is especially the case in the northern districts, though I am happy to say that the art of polite lying is as much cultivated there as ever. Still, I believe that promising and fertile areas among the more primitive pagans of the hills and forests (a fine field) still exist for the more advanced students of the higher branches of the art and science.

In the Northern Emirates I have heard it said that in some cases the art of serious lying has been quite lost and the science of anatomy come to be regarded in the same light as astrology and necromancy. Indeed, matters are said to have come to such a pass in the Emirate of Sokoto that even the European political officers there employed have fallen into the habit of telling the whole plain unvarnished truth in all possible and impossible circumstances, and have thus become very irksome



A MAN OF TACT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY.

to their relations, friends and brother officials. I trust that this may be an exaggeration, but I have even been told that just as a woman may travel through the whole of the Emirate alone, wearing ornaments of great value, quite openly and run no risk of any harm befalling her, so the youngest Assistant Resident may journey through district after district assessing the villages, recording the number of adults, male and female, sheep, goats, etc., and not hear anything more than a paltry inaccuracy in a twelvemonth. If this be true, then of course the science of anatomy and analysis cannot be studied. Moreover, I would add, the most sure and scientific means of gauging the administrative qualities of the village and district heads is denied to the Residents when they can no longer study and draw conclusions from the quality, quantity and mode of presentation of the lie.

In connection with the latter rumour, however, there is one point to be remembered. The statement regarding the safety of the native woman and her jewels and the latest joined Assistant Resident in Sokoto is contained in a very glowing report on the state of affairs in that Province, and it has been suggested that so far from the art of lying having disappeared it has reached so great a state of perfection that the Resident has himself, quite unconsciously, become a highly proficient exponent. This also I do not believe, however, and prefer to think that he has fallen into a habit, not at all rare in West Africa, of exaggeration.

This habit should not be confused with the art of lying. The two differ radically. The habit of exaggeration indicates a lack of decision in the mental processes, possibly lethargy of the mind, and certainly a lack of realisation of the necessity of adhering to strict accuracy in respect to the totally irrelevant facts introduced if the underlying lie is to be successfully planted. *Per contra* proficiency in the art of lying can only be secured by constant practice of the higher powers of observation and reasoning, by delicate balance and calculation as to the mental processes of others, and above all by drilling the mind in accurate habits of thought so that it shall never express the slightest inaccuracy or exaggeration (far less an untruth) by accident or through inadvertence.

Objection may be taken to this statement as contradicting one already made to the effect that an Emir has to lie a good deal and on diverse matters in order to keep his hand in. There is, however, no contradiction but a divergence only. The student must learn to differentiate clearly in his mind between the presentation of a lie *viva voce* and the purveyance or promulgation

of a lie in writing or in a speech liable to be so recorded. The object of the enterprise is certainly identical. It is to deceive. The first step towards this object is in both cases to produce a state of confusion or chaos in the mind of the recipient, so that it may be ready to accept a falsehood as a truth or to believe a true statement of fact to be a pack of lies, but the mode of procedure will differ greatly.

The presenter of an untruth *viva voce* is in many ways more happily circumstanced than is his brother-in-arms, the purveyor by means of the written document. To the presenter are requisite promptitude, decision, and especially charm of manner. If he exert these properly the recipient, though he should suspect

an untruth, will be loth to admit the fact, even to himself. "Can it be," he will say, "that such a charming fellow, evidently so well-informed, with his facts all at his finger-ends, can be telling me a pack of lies? I cannot, will not, believe it." Thus reasoning, he contuses his own mind, and from contusion to confusion is a short step. A presenter possessing sufficient address of manner may even dispense with crutches altogether and need have no recourse to irrelevant truths, prolixity, and the other resources open to the liar.

The purveyor of the written untruth, on the other hand, is deprived of the assistance which a charming manner and an appearance of bluff honesty confer. He must depend, in order first of

all to create an atmosphere of truth and absolute accuracy favourable for the operation of the lie, chiefly on a liberal use of true but more or less irrelevant statements of fact. Next, in order to produce confusion of the mind, on great prolixity and redundancy of expression, so that the recipient, after reading away for some time may say: "This is all very fine and certainly all very true, but hanged if I can make out what he is driving at. All this seems beside the point, but I suppose we shall get there presently. I confess to feeling rather confused all the same." Thus drifting along, he soon becomes an easy prey. But what



A SUCCESSFUL "PRESENTER."

a disaster should he detect even one inaccuracy in all this mass of irrelevancy! In place of being lulled into a confused but dreamy, credulous, receptive state of mind, he becomes at once alert, sceptical, and repellant.

There is another radical difference between the position of the teller and that of the writer of a lie, again all in favour of the teller; I mean the chance of escape on detection. The teller, even if detected, can generally make good his retreat, though possibly in disorder. Only should he lose his head will he actually be convicted. He can always, if pressed, open a long discussion, contradict himself, feign to misunderstand questions put to him, feign deafness even, as a very last resource can close the interview altogether by saying he has to keep an appointment with a man about a dog; or by losing his temper and calling the other man a liar! By all these means he can escape conviction.



OLD LIAR RELATES SUCCESSES TO YOUNGER LIAR.

But the writer of a lie is in a far more precarious position. *Litera scripta manet*. There are in the world dull, studious persons who seem to take a pleasure in hunting out the lies of others. Such marplots, kill-joys, call them what you will, do not scruple to examine written documents in a sceptical frame of mind. They will segregate any number of irrelevant facts, supply the missing portions of the plausible half-truths, detect the apparently trifling but really very important omissions. Thus proceeding, they will plod right through all the baffling intricacies of the maze, capture the lie in the centre, drag it out into the light of day, and exhibit it right before the eyes of its

horrified parent. What a position for the writer to find himself in ! Only one means of escape remains open, generally speaking ; he must plead ignorance. But most people would rather be convicted of lying than of being grossly ignorant fellows. I say generally speaking, because as a matter of fact there are some so placed that they can plead " I have been misinformed," having round them a group of individuals whose duty it is to keep them rightly informed. It is not a plea that can be used often with any great effect, however, as, to acquire the reputation of being likely to believe the erroneous statements of others is liable to defeat all future efforts in the way of lying. People simply will not be at the trouble to find out whether such an individual is writing the truth or not.

To lie successfully in writing requires space and time. The really skilful exponents of this art are lavish in their expenditure of both. They fill pages and pages of closely-typed foolscap crammed with true, but totally irrelevant, statements, contained in long verbose sentences of deliberately complicated and obscure structure, interlarded cunningly with mild exaggerations, balanced by apparently slight but really very important omissions, in order to prepare the mind of the recipient. How skilfully they introduce after a preliminary bombardment of this description, a small force of half-truths ! How cleverly, when this small force has entrenched itself in the mind of the recipient, the real poisonous virulent lie is planted, and then covered up again with masses of irrelevant matter ; so that the mind of the recipient, even though he suspects its existence, becomes so confused, overloaded, congested and generally bewildered and bemused that it is in vain he reads and re-reads the statement trying to discover where the lie is hidden ; at last, becoming incapable of further mental action, he retains the barb ranking in his bosom, nor until the damage has been done does he become aware of its existence. But dear me ! to make good the smallest and least important misrepresentation of fact an exponent of the art who knows his work (and my brother officials, notorious truth-tellers all, tell me I do know it) would fill more space than is allowed for this entire chapter. Moreover, the art so practised becomes shorn of all its more picturesque features, becomes dull, pedantic and prosaic, and I will not bore my readers with a further description of it.

Splendide mendax ! Eheu fugaces ! The glorious liars, Pagans and Muslims, and their lies with whom I was privileged to live for many happy years. It makes me sad to think I shall hear them no more. With what food for constant thought and

for admiration of the ingenuity displayed did they not furnish one. The cunningly contrived omissions, half-truths, inclusions of irrelevant facts ! What pretty patterns used thus to be created and with what an engaging manner they were often presented. Then the kaleidoscopic change in the whole scheme of colouring and of the arrangement of the pattern which would take place when the presenter of the lie was in danger of detection, and rapidly shifted his ground, leaving one lost in admiration and in a hopeless state of confusion and bewilderment. How quickly



CATTLE-FILANE NEAR SOKOIO.

and with what apparent ease can the bewildered, baffled, bemused effect be produced in the mind of the recipient when the lie is skilfully presented *viva voce* ! It not infrequently happens that the recipient, during the interview itself, has no suspicion of the truth, or that his mind has been seriously attacked and damaged. He goes away quite happy and with a light heart. It is only afterwards that suspicion dawns on his mind, and that hopeless pursuit of the misrepresented fact begins and leads him through the complicated passages of the skilfully constructed maze until, lost in its many twists and turnings and bereft of all sense of direction, he suddenly realises that his powers of reasoning have been damaged beyond repair or even destroyed.

Can it be that all those charming old liars are either dead or have taken to telling plain bald uninteresting truths? Surely not. To quote a saying in Hausa: "Ko kana da gaskia za arassa karia da kariachi? Aa! Goro kua ba za ta rassa dachi ba" ("Though you be truthful shall there be no more lies and lying? Aye, and the Kola nut* too shall not lack bitterness.") If the liar and his lies have passed away, then all I can say is that a Resident's life has been shorn of half its poetry and romance.

* The Kola Nut is a nerve stimulant extensively chewed by the natives and is very bitter. They might say "Bitter as Kola," as we say "Hot as ginger." Captious reader: "This is too much, you are foisting a would-be humorous adaptation of your own on me as a Hausa saying or proverb." Author: "I see your point. But read what I have written regarding the necessity for the successful liar to follow closely the mental processes of others. You will never acquire the art. I carefully did not write 'Hausa saying,' I wrote 'a saying in Hausa,' that covers an English saying rendered by anybody into Hausa. It is true that probably no native of Hausa-land ever said what I have written, or anything in the least like it, but that is beside the point."



AN EMIR VISITING HIS STABLE.

CHAPTER VII.

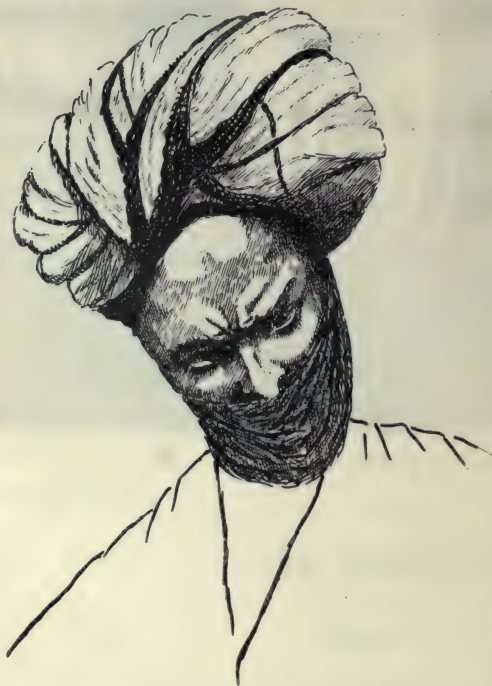
POCHADE.

EGGS, FOWLS, GUINEA-CORN AND HORSES.

IN the early days, just after we had established a Protectorate over those territories known for many years as Northern Nigeria—including roughly between lines drawn from Lokoja to Yola—Yola to Lake Chad—Lake Chad to Sokoto, and thus back to Lokoja, an area of some 250,000 square miles (about the size of England and France), the duties of a Resident of a Province were of the most varied description. Some of the Provinces contained as much as thirty thousand square miles (approximately the size of Scotland), and from two million to three million inhabitants, whilst the smallest contained eight thousand square miles (the area of Wales), and a quarter of a million inhabitants. The political staff allotted to each Province varied, of course, with its size and importance, but for many years the personnel was extremely exiguous, the smallest province seldom having more than one political officer or the largest more than four or five.

The Resident in charge of a province was really in the position

of a Lieutenant-Governor, owing to distances, Sokoto being three hundred miles, for instance, and Kukawa seven hundred



SOME NATIVES CANNOT STAND THE SIGHT OF A
WHITE MAN.

miles, and what is more important fifteen to thirty days' journey respectively from Headquarters. The Resident was often called upon to act in matters of great importance entirely on his own initiative, and this without the assistance of technical advisers of any sort. As representative of the mysterious power which impelled the white man to enter and conquer huge territories and large populations with, to native eyes, an absurdly small personnel or outward appearance of force, he was looked up to with great awe by the natives generally. Some regarded him

with fear and dislike; these would be the not-inconsiderable class of coloured individuals who have by nature the colour-instinct. Persons possessing this instinct are to be found amongst all nations. Some white men turn livid at the sight of a native; this is not their fault, nature has made them so; in like manner some natives cannot stand the sight of a white man; such individuals should wisely refrain from seeing very much of each other. Some others, naturally rather friendly disposed to the white man, and who had felt the disadvantages of the régime under which they had formerly lived, regarded him as their protector. The ultimate word in connection with any action taken in the province, by which the destinies of an individual native might be affected, were he chief or "talaka" (as the common herd are termed in Hausa), lay with him. Not that a great deal did not go on *sub rosa* without his knowledge, but

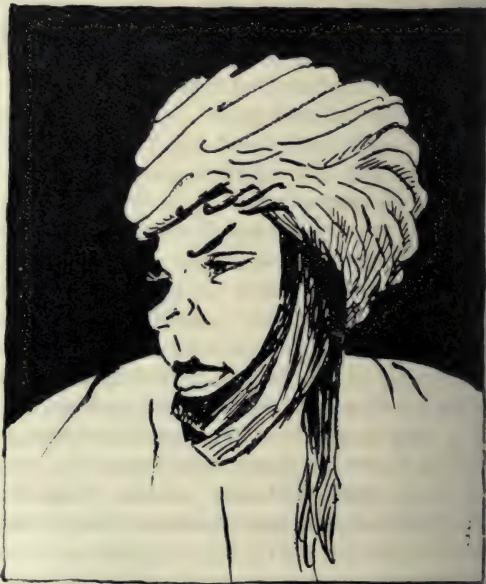
it was known that any individual could appeal to him and that whatever he said must be done would be done. His jurisdiction extended over all executive action—the dispatch of military expeditions in many cases, the collection of taxes, and also over the Courts of Justice. He himself sat as President of the Provincial Courts where British Law is administered; and he could interfere to any extent he thought fit with the Native Courts, quashing, reducing sentences or transferring cases to his own Court as he deemed right. Only death sentences could not actually be put into effect without approval of the Governor, and sentences of over two years' imprisonment were subject to revision by the Governor. Full reports in respect to all action taken were of course rendered to Headquarters, but in the first place the officials at Headquarters were sufficiently overworked, and in the second place so great a time elapsed between the dispatch of a letter and the receipt of the Governor's comments thereon that the control exercised was in point of fact very small. In some cases a Resident would hardly receive half a dozen communications during a tour of from twelve to eighteen months from the Secretary, who is the Governor's mouthpiece. It will be seen that a Resident's life and work were of almost unparalleled interest, and fortunate was the group of comparatively young men who were lucky enough to be placed in a position of such responsibility and power. I may add that in many respects the conditions described above still maintain. It is true that the telegraph has opened a rift in the lute, also the technical departments—forestry, public works, etc.—have extended their tentacles, and as these work to a certain extent independently of the Resident, his pinnacle is not quite so high above that of every other man, white or black, in the neighbourhood, as it was. Still it is high enough to permit him to flap his wings and crow *in coram publicum* to a highly gratifying extent, and in my humble opinion he should be firmly supported in this exalted position.



SOME NATIVES ARE QUITE GLAD TO
SEE THE WHITE MAN.

Every rose has its thorns, however, and the Resident's rose

had four thorns. They took the form of (and now I am coming to my point, or rather points of varied sharpness), the egg and its cognate the fowl—the horse and its cognate the guinea-corn. Though cognate, each one had its own particular point—there were altogether not two points, but four. Occupying the supreme position which he did the Resident was also unavoidably a kind of maid-of-all-work for every white man in the province. No orders could reach an Emir excepting through the Resident. To have permitted each European to send messages to the Emir would have impaired the authority of the Resident—a terrible contingency—and further would have led to extortion, as the various messengers would certainly have supplemented orders of their own over and above those given by their masters. The extraordinary impertinence of which a sophisticated native can be capable, the preposterous requests which he can make in his master's name, must be actually experienced before they can be believed. I will not therefore strain the credulity of the reader (or cause him to blush) by relating them. In his capacity as maid-of-all-work the Resident had to see that the Europeans and their servants the troops and their camp-followers and “wives,” and all persons connected with the European administration, and their horses, were supplied with the necessaries of life. If these could not be obtained in the open market they had to be procured through the Emirs. Matters are getting rather better now, but in the early days the natives would not accept our money readily, and moreover, the resources of even the largest markets could not supply the astonishing quantity of certain commodities required by a group of half a dozen Europeans and a company of soldiers.



THE EMIR'S COMPLIMENTS AND THERE IS NO GUINEA-CORN THIS YEAR.

The fowl can become a frightfully important bird in certain circumstances. In Africa he is the staple of the white man's "chop," as his food is called. When he is not large he has to be secured in appalling numbers to satisfy the healthy appetites of a group of young subalterns. The same may be said of his cognate the egg, and so they both became thorns in the side of the Resident. Fowls and eggs must be got, or there might be trouble in the most unexpected directions. I remember on one occasion the officer commanding the garrison at Sokoto called upon me with a very long and serious face to have a prearranged interview with regard to certain matters which he desired to bring to my very serious attention. It transpired that the price of fowls was a straw indicating a current of possibly tremendous force. It appeared that though the price had remained stationary, as fixed by me as Resident, at two for 3d., the size of the bird supplied had been gradually diminishing, and thus in point of fact the price of fowls had gone up. It was none of his business to interfere with political matters, but had I given my attention to this apparently trivial, but possibly very important, detail? He for his part felt an inward conviction that the increasing smallness of the fowls brought to the white man was a clear indication of the growing hostility of the native to the white man and his rule. The native had evidently found out the white man's favourite dish and was "stinting him." He feared unrest among the natives. He had consulted his native Sergeant-Major and the Sergeant-Major agreed with him, mentioning as a corroboration that the natives had of late not been attending the cha-cha parties at the fort in such numbers as heretofore. I may mention that cha-cha is a gambling game exactly equivalent to throwing the dice. In all these circumstances he thought it necessary to ask me to see that the fowls grew larger, and should I be unable to effect an increase it would then be necessary for him to bring the matter to the notice of Headquarters. I hastily assured him that this should receive my prompt and early attention, begging him not to do anything rash in the way of alarming Headquarters before we had done all we could to stimulate the growth of fowls locally. This he agreed to, and the official interview terminated very cordially. I did not, however, drop the subject altogether, for, as it appeared to me that two birds for 3d. was a fairly cheap rate, even though they were not very large, I was consumed with curiosity to know what he considered a reasonable price for a fowl. How many fowls should he get for 3d., I pondered? On many occasions in conversation with him I tried to satisfy this curiosity, but I

could never reach the bottom of the matter, and am left to this day pondering whether in his heart of hearts he did not consider that a cheap fowl would be one with which he received a bonus on delivery. As to how much that bonus should be, as to whether he should get 3d. for each fowl he ate, or more, or less, to this day I have never been able to decide.

A shortage of fowls means a shortage of eggs. Any school boy will tell you that. Moreover in Haussa-land the white man is peculiarly situated *vis-a-vis* the egg. Natives do not eat eggs.



THE EMIR'S COMPLIMENTS, AND THERE ARE
NO EGGS TO-DAY.

This is a curious thing, and I have never been able to discover the reason. One motive given to me is that a creature unborn is unfit for human food—the egg contains the unborn fowl and so should not be eaten. Be this the reason or not, it is a fact that natives even when starving do not eat eggs. Consequently an egg is an “egg” to him and nothing more. Though in point of fact there are in Haussa-land breakfast eggs, new-laid eggs, fresh eggs,

cooking eggs, and just “eggs,” even as there are in other countries, the native knows nothing about this. The white man wants eggs, he brings him eggs. Judging from some of the eggs he brings one would almost assume that he does not think we eat eggs at all, but that it is a kind of ju-ju of ours—the symbol of some strange mysterious power. He may imagine, for who shall gauge the width and scope of the native’s imagination, that once a white man has made a native give him eggs he can make him give him anything else he chooses. Be that as it may the native very soon learnt that the one thing that the white man must have is eggs, and from this resulted a superabundance of eggs on some occasions, and an egg famine on other occasions, the native stinting the white man when he wanted to make himself disagreeable. *Per contra*, I have known an Emir, when he desired to make the Governor particularly welcome, to send up one thousand eggs as a present. It is customary for a native Emir when visited by another Emir, or by a native of any importance, to present him with one thousand

kolas* or less, according to his degree; on this occasion the Emir duly sent the one thousand kola nuts, and I suppose that is how he arrived at the number of eggs which would be a suitable present for his Excellency. It may well be guessed that one thousand eggs took some time collecting, and though the cook may have found half a dozen eatable ones, the vast majority were probably just "eggs," and hardly even that.

As I have said above, the fowl can be a frightfully important bird, not only on account of itself but on account of the eggs that it lays. It is even recorded (orally) that a certain Resident harassed by lack of fowls and eggs was heard to say in his depression, not "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove," but, "Ah, that I were a hen and could lay an egg."

Guinea-corn is the staple food in most of the provinces, and is eaten by men and animals alike. There are two weak points about guinea-corn, it may be too young and green, and when given to horses may cause colic and death, or it may be too old and weevily, with the like result. These are the Scylla and Charybdis of guinea-corn. The merciful man is merciful to his beast, and the Officer in Command of a Mounted Infantry Company is merciful to his animals, whatever he may be to the Resident. He is therefore, on the lookout for those two points. How often have I been dashed from a state of joyful exuberance when seeing a string of carriers bringing in the year's supply of guinea-corn, thinking that we had got over that difficulty, by a hastily scrawled chit, as notes are called in Africa, from the M.I. Officer, bearing the fatal words, "Sorry, old chap, that corn is all green, can't give an ear to the horses; they would all die." Or again when going round the M.I. lines, and looking with satisfaction at the well-filled corn-bins, the officer has casually remarked, "Well, as a matter of fact, I mentioned in my report that a board of officers has condemned the lot; it is all old and weevily, can't give it to the horses; suppose you will hear about it from Headquarters."

There is one thing that guinea-corn cannot be, that is both weevily and old as well as green, but as to whether it is "weevily" or "green" there may be two opinions; whilst one officer may consider the corn reserve to be green and insist on a fresh supply, his successor, arrived possibly a short time after the new lot has been ordered from the natives but not yet delivered, may take the view that it is weevily. The result of this on one occasion was correspondence something in the following form

* The Kola Nut is a luxury extensively chewed by the natives who can afford to do so. It is very bitter and is said to be a powerful stimulant.

between Headquarters and the Resident : " Telegram No. 5000. Urgent.—The Commandant reports O.C. states corn supplied M.I. Sokoto green, Governor expects Resident to avoid these contingencies. Secretary." The Resident hastened to give the necessary orders. Three months afterwards a Telegram Priority X.Y.Z. 5002, " Commandant reports O.C. states corn supplied M.I. Sokoto this year weevily. Governor expects you to avoid such contingencies. Secretary." The Resident's anxiety on receipt of the second telegram on the top of the first was relieved by finding them couched in the same terms. He would, of course, have expected the second telegram to have been drafted in a severer mood, and wondered how it was that the Governor had been so lenient. The Resident, it is said, pondered over this matter for some time, and it was not till some twelve years afterwards that he unravelled the mystery. In the Secretariat a communication when received is placed in a " jacket " ; on the jacket is clearly marked the subject matter. Further correspondence on the same subject is then placed in the same jacket, so that the Governor when dealing with the matter has all the correspondence before him. This jacketing, however, is done by native clerks, and the proper affixing of correspondence to a jacket depends, of course, a great deal on the appropriateness of the docket to the subject contained. The right docket for the first communication would have been, " Corn, green, supplied to M.I." When the second communication arrived in the Secretariat regarding the weevily corn, the clerk, more skilful than his predecessor, looked up the index under C. for correspondence relating to corn, and found nothing, because, owing to the other's gross blunder, the docket had been entered under the letter G—Green corn. Thus it came about that the second communication instead of being put up before the Governor together with the first was put up separately, and so the Resident was saved. He is said to have often pondered over the importance of that trifling error on the part of the clerk, and its great influence on his career. For what would have been the effect on that career had he at the very outset been found guilty of so great a solecism as supplying the M.I. with corn that was both weevily and green ? This instance will elucidate a fact which has puzzled many. In every Government Office are to be found a certain proportion of hopelessly incompetent clerks, and to the uninitiated their retention appears wholly unjustifiable. But the chapter of accidents plays a very important part in most official careers. It is no doubt in order to give play to this great force that wise Heads of Departments

retain these clerks in order that the subordinate officials may at times profit by a fortunate little mistake such as the one quoted above.

I now turn to the greatest thorn of all, the question of horses. A little pressure will extract fowls, eggs and guinea-corn from an Emir without any great heart-rending, but the extraction of horses is a very different matter. You might as well compare the extraction of an upper molar with a lower front tooth. How often have I seen a look of hopeless despondence and desolation spread over the face of an Emir and his chiefs, and their dejected mien, when mention is made as to the need of horses for the white man. It is as though mentally and bodily a depressing fog had enveloped them. They droop and wither as though blighted by a cutting wind. They came so happy to call on the Resident, all pranked out in beautiful rustling garments. In what a different frame of mind they return? Their very robes seem to hang loosely and noiselessly from their shoulders.



THE EMIR'S COMPLIMENTS, AND ALL THE HORSES ARE DEAD.

The horse occupies a peculiar position in Haussa-land. He is the visible and outward manifestation of rank and wealth, power and swagger. A fine horse suggests to the native mind successful slave-raids. In fact before we occupied the country a really good horse could rarely be bought for cowries;* his price was always reckoned in slaves. Moreover, amongst members of a society in about the same stage of advancement as was England in the time of the Wars of the Roses, his importance was greatly in excess of anything that might be supposed. To a big chief liable to be called upon to furnish an escort for the

* The cowrie shell was the medium of currency and had so been used in Haussaland since the early part of the eighteenth century. We stopped the import and introduced our own money into the country.

Emir in times of real danger, when attack from a neighbouring Emir was expected, or liable to have to defend himself from his own paramount chief should he happen to have fallen into disgrace, it may well be supposed that the possession of good horses was more important than the possession of all but the necessities of life. A chief would part with any luxuries, such as fine clothes, the silver bangles and ear-rings of his wives, or with the wives themselves for the matter of that, sooner than with his string of horses. The Emirs found it somewhat of a bore to furnish endless dozens of eggs, hundreds of fowls, and thousands of bundles of guinea-corn in the year, but after all the white man paid for these, and such payments I shrewdly suspect generally remained with the Emirs themselves, so the extraction of these commodities did not really afford them unmitigated pain. The extraction of horses, however, was a very different matter. The vast majority of horses in an Emirate belonged to the Emir himself in a sense, that is to say he had bought them from traders coming generally from the North (territories bordering on the Sahara, where the Asbenawa, often called the Tuaregs, bred them in great numbers), and had portioned them out amongst his followers. To supply the Resident's demand he had therefore to extract these again, a process which did not render him popular with his own people. Of course, could we have exchanged the horses for slaves the matter would have been much simpler, but we did not happen to have any slaves, and the coinage which we had to offer did not enable the Emir to replace his horses. In point of fact, though the Government prices fixed were generous enough, somewhat over the market value, for all other commodities, in the matter of payment for horses, looking back, I fear that we did not err on the side of generosity by any means. A strange *idée fixe* had established itself in the brains of the Government, and thence had taken a firm hold on every white man in the country from the earliest days, when our occupation had not penetrated into the interior and we were still at Lokoja or thereabouts, that in the Haussa States horses were quite as plentiful as blackberries, and very cheap. Gradually, this idea had taken a solid form in the shape of the maximum price of £5 for the very best horse. The Residents who knew better strove for a long time against this hallucination. I remember telling a fairly senior officer that the price of a horse at a certain large native centre before we came into the country was ten slaves. "Then," he replied promptly, and quite firmly, "the price of a slave was at that place in those days 10s." No horses whatever were obtainable in the open market, with the sole exception

of that at Kano where a few old crocks used at times to be exposed for sale.

A European cannot do his work in the Northern Provinces without a horse. Practically all the white men had therefore to be mounted. The Mounted Infantry must also have horses. What was to be done? To the majority of officials the matter was quite easy—they simply applied verbally or in writing to the Resident of one of the Northern States who was responsible for seeing that the necessities of life and of the Administration were supplied—horses were as plentiful as blackberries, and if the Resident could not send them, and good horses, then he was no Administrator. He might be even worse, he might be a “pro-native!” Frivolous demands he could ignore. For instance it is recorded (oral record) that a certain officer telegraphed to the Resident, Zaria, in the following strain: “Priority—No. 1003. Purchase at once fourteen horses. Average £4 each. I will arrange for mounting.” To which the Resident replied: “Priority—No. 1004. Purchase at once fourteen cases whisky, average price 7s. 6d. I will arrange for consumption.”

But setting such frivolities aside there were the real needs to be met, and those could only be met by the Emirs; so that the horse became to the Resident a frightfully important animal, even more formidable than the fowl. Horses had to be extracted from the Emir, and moreover a respectable price had to be extracted from the white man. The double operation militated against the Resident's popularity. You may respect your dentist, you may think your dentist essential; you cannot really like him, especially after he has extracted several large molars from your jaw.

I am happy, however, to be able to record one occasion on which a call for horses from an unexpected quarter was met with great promptitude and to the completest satisfaction of all concerned. This was on the visit of an expert veterinary surgeon from home to Sokoto. He had been sent for the express purpose of studying the diseases of horses, and asked me to send him a good number of sick horses for experimental purposes. The Emir could hardly believe his ears when he heard that sick horses were wanted, and asked that the message might be repeated, so that he might be certain that this great stroke of good fortune had really befallen him. The horses were supplied with the greatest promptitude I need hardly say. The most appalling string of old crocks imaginable streamed out of Sokoto, forming a line nearly a mile long; blind, lame, some so thin that you could see every bone in their bodies, others swollen

and bloated, they formed a dreadful spectacle to the eye of all but the expert. So ably was the order executed that one horse just crawled up to the feet of the white man and gave up the ghost. The expert was delighted, and being a very keen young man worked day and night on these interesting specimens.

Indirectly; however, they caused a disaster, for he was so busy that he forgot to look after a monkey which he had brought with him, with the result that it escaped. Now it appeared that this monkey was not as other monkeys, no ordinary blood flowed in its veins. It constituted a kind of treasure-chest for all the more interesting germs collected by the expert. No sooner had he spotted some new or valuable microbe than into the monkey it went, live and kicking. The loss of the monkey was therefore disastrous, and it is only to be hoped that the treasures it contained died with it, and did not, like the winds when released from Pandora's Box, escape over the face of the earth.

Such are the thorns that grow on the rose of the Resident; but for them he would be the happiest man on earth; but it is not right that mortals should be too happy, and so Providence has provided these antidotes. Sometimes the antidotes become stronger than the disease, and it is recorded (orally) that a certain Resident when lying on his camp-bed racked by the throes of African fever, was assailed by strange delusions. He thought, in his feverish dreams, that his head was pillowed on an egg, that on his body was piled a mountain of guinea-corn, that in his ears two lusty cockerels were heralding the morn, whilst round the eaves of his mud-hut had been placed the priceless Elgin marbles from the Parthenon frieze.



A FILANE HERDSMAN.

CHAPTER VIII.

PONDERATION.

LAND TENURE.

THERE is no question of more importance to the European Administrator of African tribes than that of Land Tenure. No subject bulks so large in the eyes of the native. Through no other channel of administration can a Government so completely establish satisfactorily the economic status and social relations of a native population or, on the contrary, so surely and completely reduce the natives to a state of poverty, mutual discord, grumbling and resentment against their rulers than by the adoption of right or wrong measures in respect to the tenure of land by natives.

It is evident that the number, prosperity and power of every community must depend in all and every circumstance to a very great degree on the use which the members of the community make of the natural resources of that portion of the earth's surface which they occupy. In the case of a primitive community surrounded by other hostile communities the importance of this axiom is liable to be brought home to its members in so drastic a manner, by the enslavement or extinction of a whole tribe for instance, that the fundamental importance of a proper use of the soil to the needs of the community is never lost sight of. In such circumstances the monopolisation by individuals of areas necessary to the very existence of the tribe is a thing not to be thought of. But in the complex conditions of life which the improvement of means of transport, the spread of commerce between nations, the invention of labour-saving machinery, the creation of immense reserves of wealth have brought about among civilised nations the fundamental connection between the prosperity of the entire community and the proper use of the soil has been very often and to a great degree lost sight of. People living in one part of the globe may depend for the real necessities of life on the work of others living in another distant part, giving in exchange for these necessities perhaps objects of luxury only. And yet both nations may be to all appearances equally prosperous. The means of acquiring wealth, principally owing to ease of transport, are so varied for both nations and individuals that the importance of a proper use of land has in point of fact become a matter of less, or at all events less urgent and immediate, importance to a civilised community. So we find most civilised communities to-day tolerating laws which permit of individuals, if they choose to do so, occupying lands in a manner unhelpful to the community. Nevertheless, it is a fact that the immense stores of reserved wealth, the immense increase of the power of man over the forces of nature, due to inventions which chain those forces to his service, and the general improvement in relations between races scattered all over the globe, enabling the produce of the world to be rapidly and easily conveyed to those who can make best use of it, have not resulted in so great an improvement in the material and economic situation of the people generally as might have been expected. The poor have remained as poor, if they have not become poorer; it is only the rich who have become richer. This has led to the value of the institution of freehold in land being questioned. By some it is argued that the control over what should be national resources which is conveyed by the institution of freehold in land is a power so great over the

destinies of other individuals, and thus over the destinies of the community, that it should not be delegated by the State to any group of individuals. That it being of essential importance to the community that the resources of the land should be developed to the full, the State should retain to itself the power of evicting inefficient occupiers. That in short the land should be nationalised. Those who hold contrary views argue that although in theory it may be dangerous to the welfare of the State that a group of individuals should thus be able to obtain control over the land, yet that in practice it has not proved so. That to possess a "bit of land" is a healthy normal instinct, which should be encouraged and not discouraged. That without security of tenure nobody will have the enterprise to improve the land. That were the Government (that is to say the State) the sole landlord, the tenants would receive worse treatment than they do from individual landlords. To these arguments it may be replied that security of tenure equal to the security which is conferred by a title in fee-simple can be ensured to the tenant who makes full use of his land under the institution of land nationalisation, as under the institution of freehold in land; that experience has amply proven that the possession of the freehold is not essential to improvement of land, inasmuch as that by far the greatest improvements to be found, especially on areas situated in thickly populated urban districts, have been made and are daily being made by others than possessors of the freehold titles to those areas. Further, that so far from there being any likelihood that the Government will be a worse landlord than the individual, there is every reason to suppose the contrary; for the individual in a dispute with the Government does invariably receive the sympathy and support of other individuals, whereas in a dispute with another individual he must generally fight his own battles.

It would not be within the scope of such a work as this to attempt to go fully into this abstruse question or to attempt to draw any conclusions as to what it may or may not be feasible to undertake in the direction of land nationalisation in the complex conditions which govern the social life of highly civilised countries. The reader will perhaps, however, allow me to state that it appears to me to be a remarkable phenomenon that with all the immense activity exerted during recent generations towards securing the liberty of the individual, and the alertness employed to detect and frustrate any tendency to restrict that liberty, yet so little interest is displayed in the question of all others which most fundamentally affects that liberty. We have

continually curtailed the powers of one man to influence the destinies of another when that power took the shape of readily recognisable personages such as Kings, Barons or Priests, yet we have submitted and are daily submitting to an ever increasing extent to a far more drastic control exerted by one individual over another through the institution of freehold in land. We are ready to clamour against the least increase in taxation, which we impose on ourselves through the recognised medium of laws framed in accordance with the wishes of the majority, but we accept quite readily, as though it were a natural phenomenon, the collection of a tax, which we all contribute to pay, of an uncertain almost unascertainable amount in the form of ground rent, which is levied upon the majority by a minority. To whatever extent this question may be shelved without excessive damage to the vital interests of the masses in highly civilised and developed countries, it cannot be, or at least it should not be, so shelved in the vast areas occupied by natives living in primitive conditions such as those which we are considering. Here the fact that the number, health and prosperity of the community is intimately connected with a proper use of the soil and its products, mineral and vegetable, is patent. Here this truth is not buried and lost sight of owing to the existence of vast agglomerations of persons living in cities, who, to outward appearances, have little connection with the soil.



A very close enquiry was held by the Government of Northern Nigeria in the years 1907, 1908 during the Governorship of

Sir Percy Girouard into local native law and custom regarding land tenure. In the course of this enquiry it was found that it was an invariable rule that the tribe or community regarded the area which it considered to be its own to belong to its members generally. The right of every adult individual of a tribe to occupy and farm a portion of the tribal lands sufficient for the needs of himself and his family was recognised, so long as he conformed with those obligations which the tribe as a whole thought it necessary to enforce to secure its protection and welfare. If he failed to meet those obligations he was very drastically dealt with, deprived of his farm, enslaved by other members of the tribe or even sold into slavery out of the tribe. The occupation of land was strictly conditional on the proper use of the land and the performance of those duties called for by the needs of the community. Failure in either of these performances reduced the individual to the state of a hewer of wood and a drawer of water. The title to the tribal lands and the power of apportionment to the individual was vested in the office, not the persons, of the chief or group of elders. In no case before our advent would any native have laid a personal claim to the area he farmed. He would say: "This is my farm, it is on land belonging to such and such a chief or such and such a town."

In no case had the land acquired a transfer value as between individuals. A chief might demand a payment before permitting an individual to occupy, but this was regarded as a legitimate form of raising revenue and did not constitute the chief or the tenant owner of the land. Farms might change hands and sometimes some small gratuity might be paid by one or the other of the parties (even such cases were however rare), but these transfers had to receive the sanction of the tribal government. In no case was it found that a claim on the part of any individual to hold and occupy an area for his own use and enjoyment in a manner contrary to the interests of the tribe, or to transfer it to whom and under what terms he pleased, was for a moment recognised by native law and custom. Indeed the vast majority of the natives regarded the existence of such an idea as quite outside the range of possibility. In short the lands were "nationalised" in the strictest sense of the term, and no title at all resembling our "freehold" was found to be known to the natives, and in no case was a native chief empowered to alienate tribal lands either to a member of the tribe itself or to a stranger.

It must not be supposed, however, that the native had no security of tenure. Granted that he met his obligations it was

regarded as an act of unpardonable oppression if the chief should deprive him of his holding, and, in fact, such cases were unknown among the pagans and occurred only in the territories of some of the worst Muslim Emirs. It was, on the contrary, found that generally a farm had been in the hands of the same family for generations. In no case was a "landlord" class, *i.e.*, private individuals who collect rent in exchange for permitting others to occupy land, found to exist: indeed the very idea appeared inconceivable to the natives.

Such were the conditions of land tenure revealed by very exhaustive enquiries as existing among the hundreds of different tribes of Northern Nigeria. From further enquiries and observation I am fully convinced that those conditions are not peculiar to Northern Nigeria but are common to all the tribes of Africa untouched by the civilisation of Europe. All those acts of native chiefs which, by means of treaties made with strangers, alienated the tribal lands are, in my opinion, according to native law and custom, *ultra vires*.



A NATIVE FARMER.

In the case of Pagan tribes the obligations imposed by the community on the individual were simple and not very onerous. To be ready to join in the fight when the tribe was at war, to raise sufficient grain to support a family and to contribute to

the common stock for the purpose of brewing beer for the harvest festivals, and, on occasions, to bring a present to his chief or one of the elders, was generally all that a man was called upon to do. In the case of the great Muhammadan Emirates the conditions were more onerous. In addition to turning out for war at the call of the Emir the people were burdened by a complex and searching system of taxation. This was put into force by a large band of tax gatherers.

In these Emirates the conditions were such as to foster the evolution of the institution of freehold in land. It required only the creation of standing armies, a prolonged state of absence of danger from foreign invasion, or any other circumstances which should enable the occupier of the land to commute his military duties to the State for a monetary payment, to permit freehold to emerge. In the days of William the Conqueror the whole of the lands of England were vested in the office of the King. He partitioned these lands among the Feudal Barons, and they, in turn, subinfeudated to the Lords of the Manors. The peasantry were some freeholders and some serfs of the manor. The occupiers, from the Feudal Baron in his castle right down to the peasant in his hovel, retained their holdings only so long as the various obligations, under which they were granted, towards their liege lord (ultimately the State as represented by the office of King) were duly fulfilled. The principal of these obligations on the part of the freeholder was that he should be ready to follow his chief to war, and, on the part of the serf, that he should labour on the lands of his chief. Gradually compulsory labour was abolished, the serf of the manor commuting his obligation towards the Lord of the Manor for a monetary payment, and, as the freeholder of the manor became no longer liable for military service, these two classes became landowners in the modern sense of the term, the first acquiring the title of copy-holder and the second that of a holder in fee-simple. The Feudal Barons and Lords of the Manors losing their grip on the areas occupied by their dependents, carved for themselves estates from the common lands.

In Nigeria, when we first occupied these territories, in all those areas, that is to say, where the Emirates or Chieftainates had emerged from primitive conditions, we found a situation exactly similar to those just described as existing in England. The serf and the freeholder were still under personal obligations to their chiefs and held their lands on exactly the same terms. Our advent, by abolishing the system of compulsory unpaid labour (the *corvée* of Egypt), and by the establishment of the

Pax Britannica, removing the obligation of military service from the shoulder of the peasant, would, in the normal course of events, have fostered the evolution of the institution of freehold in land on exactly the same lines as it was gradually developed in England. In many parts of Africa the process is complete, and in many other parts the evolution is being allowed to take place gradually. The Governments are allowing the question to drift, and, as for the most part the native laws and customs in these areas are at the same time being gradually stifled and rendered obsolete by the operation of the white man's law, the institution of freehold in land is slowly emerging. It is a gradual process and operates almost unnoticed, as, on the whole, these Governments are chary of issuing titles to land. The channel through which the institution of freehold in land is principally emerging is that of Supreme Court decisions, by which a native tenant is made to relinquish his holding to another in the payment of judgment debts. A title is secured to the native thus installed by a Supreme Court Order which generally holds good against all comers, including the State itself as represented by the Government. This process was operating in most parts of Southern Nigeria up to the time of the amalgamation with Northern Nigeria in 1914.

A full enquiry having revealed the native laws and customs governing land tenure in Northern Nigeria, the question as to what position the Government should adopt *vis-a-vis* these laws and customs was then gone into. By not a few it was urged that we should introduce the native to the "useful institution of freehold in land." "Let each native occupier," it was argued, "in so far as is practically possible, be secured in his holding by a permanent title, issued by the Government; where this cannot be done in the case of individuals let it be done in the case of groups or sections of natives." Having thus disposed of all areas occupied by natives, it was suggested that all unoccupied areas should be declared to be Crown lands. Such areas could then be either leased or sold by Government to Europeans or granted to native Chiefs as a set-off against the losses incurred by them owing to the abolition of the legal status of slavery (as has actually been done in Uganda). "Labour necessary to develop the Crown lands will be readily obtained from the areas allocated to the natives. These will work a part of the year on their farms, but will have time and opportunity to labour for wages in the employment of companies and individuals occupied in the development of the Crown lands."

At a first glance there would appear to be much to be said

in favour of such a policy. Moreover, it is a policy which will appeal to the man-in-the-street in Europe, who is not clearly acquainted with native affairs, as establishing conditions which resemble almost exactly those under which he lives himself either at home or in colonies populated by Europeans.

There is, however, a good deal, as I have previously stated, to be said against the value of the institution of freehold even in Europe. The arguments to be brought against the introduction of freehold amongst natives are, in my humble opinion, incontrovertible. At all events, they prevailed in the case of Northern Nigeria, and it was decided that the contrary system, whereby the land remains the property of the State, should be established. These arguments may be briefly stated as follows: In the first place the mental characteristics of the African are to be taken into consideration. The principal effect of that modification of the outside circumstances surrounding the individual from birth to grave which has been brought about by the exercise of human ingenuity, which we call civilisation, on the mental characteristics of those races which have felt its influence, is to cause an exercise of foresight on the part of the individual, and consequently on the part of the community. As races get more and more civilised, the individual becomes the more willing to sacrifice the present to the future. The savage lives for to-day only and lays up no store for the future. Some of the African races are still in a state of savagery, and of the rest the vast majority have not travelled so far on the road of civilisation that they have yet, as a class at all events, acquired the instinct and habit of allowing considerations for the morrow to govern the actions of to-day. This absence of the habit of foresight is, or should be, an all important factor when we are considering rules and laws by which the conditions under which they are to live (and for the creation of which we have assumed the great responsibility) are to be affected. The fact that the normal state of mind of the African differs from that of the European at the present day, and will continue so to differ for many generations to come, is never, for one moment, to be lost sight of.

One of the most important, some might rightly say the most important, of the rules by which the will of the majority is imposed on the individual is the law which determines the terms on which an individual is granted the exclusive privilege to use and enjoy land. I do not hold a brief for the defence of the institution of freehold in land even among the most civilised communities, but I think it must be taken as proven by practical experience that in the case of such communities, where the

individual has acquired the habit of foresight, that institution cannot be described as a complete restriction on the wellbeing of the individual or on the progress of the community. But where African races are concerned, I would ask the reader's permission to say, with all the emphasis at my command, that the introduction of the institution of freehold in land is fraught with the greatest possible danger.

By inherited instinct, the African native sets greater store by the right to the use and enjoyment of sufficient land to support himself and his family by the individual, and by the hold which his tribe retains on the areas which it considers its own, than on any other right at all. Nevertheless, so acute is his enjoyment of the present and so inactive is his imagination in respect to future conditions that African Chiefs have time after time, when given opportunities and subjected to temptations to do so, bartered away the most precious inheritance of their tribes in exchange for even the most trifling momentary advantages. Anyone who has had experience of the African character will, I feel convinced, agree with me in saying that the individual African generally speaking, will, given the opportunity, act in a similar manner. That he has not alienated much land so far in West Africa is because he has not had great opportunity to do so, and because he has not been fully alive to those opportunities. But, placed in favourable conditions, he has alienated and is alienating land to a dangerous extent already.

The inherited instinctive love of the African for his holding in land is a valuable instinct and one which we should preserve by all means in our power. I will go further into the questions relating to the employment of the African labourer, and his comparative efficiency as a paid labourer and as an independent agriculturist, later, and will here only say that it is all important to the welfare and prosperity of the African communities, on which the profitable nature to ourselves of our relations with them depend, that the native should on the whole be kept "on the land." We cannot more surely destroy this instinct and create a situation tending rather to degrade the African races than to develop them, and tending to render relations with them not only unprofitable but even dangerous to ourselves, than by introducing among them an institution which enables the individual to divest himself of the right to occupy land in favour of another. It may be said that in Great Britain public opinion is fully alive to the dangers connected with alienation of native lands to European capitalists and that the practice is nowhere even condoned. It is true that we have, rather late, perhaps,

perceived this gross abuse, damaging to our consciences and pockets alike, but I desire to emphasise the fact that the alienation of African land to the white capitalist is not the greatest danger which confronts the Government in this path. A far greater danger lies in the acquisition of large estates by individual African natives. If land required for the needs of the community as a whole is monopolised by the few for their own advantage, but to the disadvantage of the many, it makes no difference, at all events little difference, whether the few be members of the community or strangers to it. The result is the same: the privileged few can live on the product of the labour of the many, and even, if they be so perverted in mind, prevent the many from working at all, debarring them from profitable labour of all sorts. There are not wanting among African races, careless of the future and content to sacrifice the future to the present as they are on the whole, individuals of crafty, cunning and rapacious natures, fully alive to and capable of grasping any and every opportunity to secure what, to them at all events, would be a dishonest penny. It needs no great stretch of the imagination for one acquainted with the African peasant to foresee how rapidly the small holdings would first be mortgaged and then would fall into the hands of the moneylender until, in due course, whole districts would be found to be within the grasp of a few cunning, scheming natives of the baser sort, (very possibly acting in conjunction with Europeans) once the peasant realised that his plot was his own to do what he liked with. This result would appear—it is appearing already in some parts of Nigeria even—where the land is not all nationalised, on the introduction of the native to “the useful institution of freehold in land.”

It is the mental condition of the African, his proneness to live in the present, his lack of thrift and foresight, rendering him willing to sacrifice the future to the present, which, in my opinion, constitutes the principal fundamental danger connected with any action of the Government which creates or even tends to assist, to foster or to permit conditions which will result in the emergence of any title to land among the native races of Africa by which the all-important peasant may be driven from his holding and by which large blocks of land may fall into the control of a small number of individuals, be they white men or coloured.

Besides this reason, based on psychological grounds, there are numerous other objections, the roots of which do not penetrate so deeply and which are based on considerations of political expediency. For, say that the proposal previously discussed

with regard to a land settlement be adopted ; that the occupied areas should be alienated by the native communities, on behalf of whom the Government of these Protectorates and Colonies are acting, to those natives to-day settled upon them, and each settler thus became a freeholder in the full sense of the term as employed by us ; and that those tracts which are at present unoccupied (but all of which without exception are claimed by one or other of the African tribes) were declared to be Crown lands, what would be the result ? The immediate result before the agglomeration of the small holdings into the hands of a few natives had had time to take place ? The very name of Crown lands conveys to the ordinary mind lands at the disposal of the Government, so that the mere fact of large unoccupied areas existing of which no apparent use is being made, lends colour to, and even invites, hostile criticism of the action of the Government in not throwing open such areas for exploitation by European capitalists, settlers, planters, etc. Pressure is brought on the Government to cede large areas ; if not to alienate them in perpetuity, at least to grant them on long leases. Say that the Government yields to such arguments, even though it be to a reasonable extent only, what is the next move ? There comes a demand for labour. The " lazy African native " tradition is brought to the fore. " These people should be introduced to the dignity of labour "—all the stock arguments come into play.

Through every possible channel, even humanitarian channels, the Government is pressed to pass some kind of measure which, however it be disguised, is a measure of coercion, in order to compel the native to work for the European at a wage which will suit the latter. Further, in these humanitarian days, all coercive measures must be somewhat half-hearted and ineffective, excepting one. Since chattel slavery has been abolished there is only one really satisfactory and searching means of securing wage labour in plenty at a reasonable cost : it is to prevent the individual from living on the result of his own labour on the soil, by depriving him of access to the soil. This consideration too often prompts the pioneer of to-day not only not to deplore the disappearance of small holdings, but to welcome the agglomeration of large areas in few hands of even those native reserves to which we have referred. The more the natives cease to till the soil or to exploit the sylvan resources on their own account, and get into the habit of doing this work for a daily wage, the better for the labour market ; the more " fluid " it becomes, once the native is divorced from the soil, the easier he is to manage. In order to secure a good supply of cheap labour, which can be

transported easily to whatever point it is required at the moment, you do not want a self-respecting class of yeomen farmers at all; what you want is a large thriftless population of more or less physically strong individuals who have no particular ties to attach them to one or other locality, to one or other class or section of natives.

Thus the question of land tenure is connected in the closest possible manner with the burning question of labour. I am fain to admit that a policy which compels or persuades the native in numbers to abandon the position of the yeoman farmer and to enter the state of the wage labourer does facilitate the rapid development of a colony. The immediate results may be, very often are, a remarkable increase of production resulting in an increase of both exports and imports owing to the inflow of European capital, machinery, and to improved methods altogether. But does it, will it ever pay in the long run? I hold not. Though I must admit that the "lazy African" tradition is to a certain extent based on facts (though it is generally grossly exaggerated and, as I shall try to show, not by any means of universal application), and that the native cultivator with a good holding of fertile soil, or a rich section of forest abounding with sylvan produce is, and not infrequently, inclined to take life somewhat easily, yet in what way, I ask, does he differ in this respect from the native of any other country whatever, and by what right do we sit in judgment upon him for this trait in his character? Do the individuals of any nation who are happily circumstanced as a rule break their backs over their daily tasks? As a matter of fact it is the exception rather than the rule that the African is so circumstanced. What leads many European observers who do not go very closely into the matter, to assume that the native generally spends his whole life basking in the sun is that all natives while at leisure are visibly unoccupied, owing to the open air lives they lead. Were every person of leisure, and those who are not actually working, in any European capital to spend their days and hours sitting under the trees in the parks or outside their houses would any casual observer not assume that we are not on the whole overworked? In many localities the native small holder works extremely hard, quite as hard as any class of agriculturist anywhere. For instance, round the city of Kano there live about one million natives on small holdings, with an average density of population of some three hundred to four hundred persons to a square mile, entirely supporting themselves from the produce of a soil which is none too fertile and which has been under close cultivation for five

hundred years at least. In addition to supporting themselves, they have established for the past century or so a great industry in cloth, and quite recently have produced so great a harvest of ground nuts, about eighty thousand tons, I think, quoting from memory, that the railway recently constructed has been hard pressed to export it. Nothing short of great knowledge and skill in agricultural methods (all their own), combined with great application to manual labour, could produce such results. Yet the "lazy African" tradition dies hard, even in respect to such places as these.



A KANO FARMER AND HIS SON.

Granting that the African native is not more devoted to labour *qua* labour than is the native of any other continent, I hold that, to adopt the most utilitarian standard imaginable, it will "pay" us better to keep him on the whole in the condition of a small holder working on the soil than to use the various means within our reach of converting him into a wage earner. By no contrivance of machinery or organisation of paid day-labourers could we, for instance, produce from the soil of Kano the results which the native small holder is to-day obtaining.

When considering the value of African wage labour we should make a mistake should we leave out of our reckoning any of the traits of the African character. In another chapter I have explained how the African mass has a way of getting the better of the European unit when the latter tries to administer the

masses "directly"; just the same thing occurs in the case of African labour supervised by Europeans. The African labourer soon finds out the minimum of effort which he need exert to obtain the day's wage. The more experienced he becomes of the European the more he realises the extent to which the latter can be worn down, until he becomes satisfied with very little. For this reason, all over Africa, the European employer much prefers to get labour recruited from the remoter parts where possible; the "green kaffir," to use a term common in South Africa, is much in request. The result, on the whole, on substituting wage labour for the small holder is thus to restrict production, and to transform the hard-working farmer class, with a



FLUID LABOUR.

deep affection for the soil and the family, and with plenty of ambition to earn money if they see an opportunity to do so, into a band of nomad, cunning, lazy, thriftless fellows, prone to every kind of vice and debauchery. Further, the unavoidable result to the European of trying to cope with natives in direct contact with them in a tropical climate is, at the very least, loss of physical health, and not infrequently a loss of character fibre as well.

Nevertheless, I would not have the reader to suppose that I am blind to the fact that the tropical dependencies must be

developed, and that in order to raise the African in the scale of civilisation modern methods must be adopted, even at some cost to the African and the European alike, if progress is to be secured. I am fully alive to the fact, nor do I for a moment support a policy which would keep the African under a glass frame as it were. I think such a policy to be the worst of all policies which could be adopted. The arguments in favour of the preservation of the small holder and against the creation of a "fluid body" of native labour cannot be pushed to the extremes of logical deduction. It is rather a case of creating general tendencies. In the main our object should be to keep the native in the state of the small holder attached to the soil. But there exist among every African community, as in every other community, individuals of nomad and adventurous instincts, and there is no objection whatever, but on the contrary every advantage, that they should find employment as wage labourers. My point is that this class should remain restricted as it is restricted by nature, and not be artificially increased by us. In the same way, although it is highly important, to my mind essential, that the greater portion of the land should be reserved for the native small farmer and the forests for the use of the native woodsman, yet here again we should not carry out this principle to the extent of preventing the development of mineral resources, for instance, especially where these resources can only be utilised by means of European capital and by labour organised on European lines. We should be acting in a manner contrary to the interests of the natives themselves did we do so. Further, it is not to be supposed that the European capitalist and expert will employ his services in the development of the country *pour les beaux yeux* of the African any more than that the European trader can be expected to make no profit on the goods that pass through his hands.

It is necessary to emphasise this point as there appears to be a general feeling in the air that the merchant invariably showers the blessings of trade wherever he goes, and so a jealous eye is not cast upon his gains. The European exploiter of the natural resources of the country—mineral, sylvan, or other resources—is, on the other hand, very often looked at askance, and assumed to be a great rogue if he make a large fortune. No doubt there have been abuses, but in every single case of such abuse, I feel confident, the blame lies with the Government in the first place, and can be traced to lack of foresight or knowledge leading to the adoption of faulty measures. With laws framed to meet real requirements it is not possible for an

European to make a large fortune out of the mineral resources of the country without, in the process of doing so, distributing a vastly larger fortune among the natives of the territory in which he is operating; in such circumstances he may be said to deserve all he gets.

To illustrate the above remarks I would take the tin industry in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria centred at Naraguta. Providence had ordained that large deposits of this metal should occur in this neighbourhood. The natives discovered these, but they were not able to work them to any valuable extent, and it needed European brains and capital to make full use of them in the interest of natives and Europeans alike. Let us study the various aspects of this question as they presented themselves.

First in respect to land tenure. It was obviously necessary in order to render feasible capital expenditure on the part of the companies that the Government should grant leases of some length, and renewable if necessary, over the tin-bearing areas. The whole of Northern Nigeria being nationalised, as I have stated previously, and on this point I shall have more to say presently, there was no difficulty in doing this. Leases were granted of a nature to enable the holders to develop the tin deposits, but limiting their use of the surface strictly to that purpose and preventing any company from using an area so recognised for any other purpose, such as cattle ranching, for instance. [The fact of this limitation should not be lost sight of by those inclined to criticise the Government for the large areas thus leased.] Now, it so happened that these deposits were found only in areas where no native population was established, or, at all events, where such population was very sparse. But had those deposits happened to have existed in a thickly populated area, even so I hold that the Government as trustee for the natives would, after due study had shown that the production of tin would enhance the prosperity of the natives of Nigeria generally, have been amply justified in shifting the native cultivators to enable the tin field to be developed, assuming the existence of certain conditions. The principal of these conditions would be that the Government had at its disposal sufficient and suitable areas elsewhere where these native cultivators could be settled, and funds at its disposal to compensate them for disturbance and to start them again in life. Failing the availability of land to re-settle the natives, I think it would be difficult to imagine circumstances where the countervailing advantages to the native community generally would be such as to justify

the Government in removing at all events any large block of natives from their holdings to make room for an industry. In many thickly populated parts, just outside Kano itself, for instance, when it has been found in the interests of trade, and, therefore, in the interests of the native community generally, to remove the native cultivator, in order to make room for stores, warehouses, etc., this has been done, and the natives, duly compensated for disturbance, have been settled elsewhere. Owing to the fact that the land was nationalised, the Government was able to do this at small cost to the Public Funds, that is to say (and this is a point not to be lost sight of) at small cost to the native community generally. Had the "useful institution of freehold in land" been in force, the difficulty and cost of such measures would have been immense. A small, very small, portion of the natives would have been compensated out of all proportion to their deserts, probably large sums would have gone to lawyers, and thus the community as a whole would have been mulcted to a great degree in the interests of an infinitesimal minority in order to secure urgently required opportunities for development. This operation of penalising the community as a whole for the advantage of the very few I have seen taking place with the most pernicious results near Lagos, in Dahomey, in Morocco, in Tripoli, and to an appalling extent in Brazil.

To turn from the question of land tenure in connection with the tin industry to that of labour. As might have been expected, no sooner had a certain number of companies established themselves on land leased from the Government than there came a demand for labour, and cheap labour. Labour may be said always to be dear. However small the daily pay of the labourer, it is an expense and as an expense should be cut down. Pressure was put on the Government to supply this labour; they were invited to put pressure on the native Chiefs, morally or physically, to "persuade" their people to work on the tin field. To this demand the Government rigidly turned a deaf ear; a "Labour Bureau" was not started. But, on the contrary, no difficulties were put in the way of the companies in their efforts to recruit or attract labour. As a result, the Companies have obtained, not all the labour they wanted or such cheap labour (for their requirements always partake of the nature of a bottomless pit, which can never be filled), but sufficient labour and at a price which enabled the workings to be carried on. In point of fact, from ten thousand to twelve thousand labourers were secured from a population of about six million inhabitants. This is,

of course, a drop in the bucket. It would require a much larger exodus from the land to endanger the national life of the natives and call for action on the part of the Government to prevent it.

I do not know whether any large fortunes have been made out of the tin fields. I am told not, but if they have, or if they should be made in the future, nobody need grudge them; they have been fairly earned. The capital expenditure in the country and the paying out of large sums to the natives in the form of wages have greatly assisted the native community generally. The Public Funds have benefited by the payment of rents and royalties and railway freights. In short, the development of the tin industry has been of great advantage to Northern Nigeria and has not damaged the interests of a single native alive to-day or of a future generation. This excellent result may be traced to the absence of the "institution of freehold in land" and the fact that the Government would have nothing to do with supplying labour.



Having related how we found that by native law and custom the land was "national" and that the existence of freehold in land as we understand the term, was strange to the native mind, and that the Government decided to adopt the system

of "nationalisation" rather than alienation of land, with (I trust I may have convinced the reader) good results, I will now explain the measures taken to secure the continuance in force of native law and custom with such modification as to permit of development on modern lines.

In the "Land and Native Rights" Proclamation of Northern Nigeria, 1910, as the measure by which this important principle is crystallised is termed in official legal phraseology, it is clearly laid down that the Government constitutes itself trustee for the native inheritance in land to the native community of Northern Nigeria generally. That is to say in effect that all those powers which were formerly vested in the offices of the various Chiefs and Emirs were assumed by the Government. In order to hedge about the actions of the Governor, in whom these powers are vested, and to ensure his wielding them in a manner consonant with the spirit and letter of the Proclamation, he is debarred in categorical terms from alienating any portion of these lands in perpetuity and in general terms from making any grants of land of a nature to prejudice the native community as a whole. The land having thus been nationalised, it was considered what further steps should be taken to ensure it remaining national. History has shown that the institution of freehold in land has a way of making its appearance in a subtle manner by degrees, and as the result of inaction on the part of Governments rather than by positive measures. Wherever an individual has paid rent to another individual for the use and enjoyment of land the vested interest thus created and acquired by the lessor has invariably crystallised more or less quickly into a title of absolute ownership, which he could make good in the Courts of Law against all comers, including the Government, *i.e.*, the community. Had it been left open to the Government to lease out land at such prices and for such lengthy terms as to permit of the first tenant sub-letting to another, then it was judged that the land, though nominally "national," would in due course cease to be so; in fact, that vested interests in land would become established and that the whole policy would gradually be subverted.

In order to avoid this, clauses were inserted in the enactment, by which the Governor is debarred from leasing land (certain exceptions for charitable and religious objects being made*) at any but the full economic rent obtainable, that is to say, the

* Mining Leases, granted under the Minerals Proclamation, also form an exception. But it must be remembered that they are granted for mining purposes only, and do not convey surface rights other than those required for mining purposes.

ground rent charged by the Government must be the greatest possible obtainable in the market. Thus subletting is to a certain extent prevented ; but not fully. Land is constantly changing in value, in countries which are undergoing rapid development its value increases rapidly. In order further to protect the community from the accretion of land in the hands of individuals, clauses were inserted which compelled the Government to revise such rents, and the tenant to submit to such revision at intervals which might be less but might not exceed seven years, and, where the market value of the rent was found to have increased, to raise it accordingly. Thus the entire, or, at all events, all but a fraction, of the economic rent (the highest rent obtainable in the open market) was secured to the community and the institution of national lands safeguarded.

"But," it may be said, "under such stringent rules and regulations there is little or no encouragement to the individual to do anything but raise annual crops on his land and a dwelling of the most primitive kind to give him shelter from the inclemency of the weather. No native would undertake even such simple improvements as draining or fencing, nor would he have the courage to plant trees or shrubs of economic value under such conditions. Far less would the European capitalist risk undertakings of a more serious nature if no greater security of occupation is granted to them than that you have described."

The interests of the community having been thus safeguarded against predatory action on the part of the individual, it was next considered how that security of continual occupation over extended periods, necessary to give the *bona fide* occupier, native or European, who is prepared to exert his mind and resources to the full in the development of the land, could be secured to him by law without endangering the general principle underlying the law. It is evident that the provisions already described give the Government power, by raising the rent, to render the tenure of any occupier infeasible, at intervals always falling short of seven years. It was evident that these powers required to be hedged about lest the Government, by inadvertence or through some accident, should thus hinder the development of the country. In order, therefore, to protect the occupier and to secure to him the full use and enjoyment of all improvements effected by the employment of his own energy or capital, the procedure which should be adopted by the Government when revising the rent of any given plot was carefully described. In making such a revision, the Government is debarred, when assessing the revised rent to be demanded, from taking into

consideration any increment in the value of the plot under consideration which is due to those improvements which the tenant has made. The rent as revised may not exceed that obtainable for similar plots similarly situated on which no improvements have been effected ; nor may it fall short of that amount. For instance, an occupier obtains from the Government the lease of a plot of land situated, let us suppose, beyond the end of the railway. The economic rent which the Government must charge would in such a case be very low. He proceeds, perhaps, to put up a place of business on it, let us say, a tannery with numerous buildings, walls, wells, fences, etc., and, perhaps, he may plant trees and shrubs of commercial value. By all these the value of that plot is raised to a very great degree. Presently, before the term of revision has expired, the Government extends the railway, and it passes close to the door of this man's place of business. Others now come and desire to acquire land in the neighbourhood. The value of the plot we have been considering will, by reason of the railway, be again greatly enhanced. Two distinct separate influences will thus have reacted favourably on the value of that piece of land—one, the influence of the occupier's capital and energy ; the other, the influence of the capital and energy of the community taking the form of the construction of a railway. This latter value, created by the joint efforts of the community, only may be considered when the revision takes place, and not the value which was created by the occupier himself and which would have existed had the railway not arrived. The amount of the incremental rise in value due to the advent of the railway can be determined easily, but by one and one method only, *i.e.*, the demand for unimproved plots in that vicinity. If there is a demand and the Government finds that it can now obtain in the open market a higher price for the land in that neighbourhood than it charged in the first instance, then it is bound by the law to demand that price on revision. If, on the contrary, no such demand exists and the Government cannot obtain a higher rent for further areas than it charged in the case of the original area, then no increase may be made on revision, no matter what value may actually attach to the original area owing to the improvements made upon it by the occupier.

This is already a great safeguard, but it was realised that unforeseen contingencies might arise and that a useful and deserving tenant might still find himself compelled to relinquish his holding owing to ill-considered action on the part of Government at the time of revising the rents. So further provision was made

in the interests of the individual occupier, which is as follows : Should any occupier on ascertaining the figure arrived at by the Government as being chargeable on revision decide that he cannot pay the new demand, he may notify the Government that he will relinquish his holding, and in that case he is entitled to receive from the Government the full value of his unexhausted improvements. It will be seen that this constitutes a very complete defence for the occupier and must operate as a searching test of the accuracy with which the revised rent chargeable has been assessed. The Government, if unable to find another tenant, will be itself saddled with a large liability. It must be understood that the expression " unexhausted improvements " is to be construed in the strictest sense of the term. The improvement must be a real improvement ; there can be but one test as to the reality of an improvement ; that is the value which it commands in the open market. This value may be much less than the sum expended upon the work in the first instance, or it may, in conceivable circumstances, be greater. Should an individual, for example, take it into his head to build an Eiffel Tower at Kano, such an edifice erected on that spot would have but the value of scrap iron, and that would be all the compensation that he would be entitled to on relinquishing his holding. Or he might build a mansion with thirty bedrooms in some outlandish spot at enormous cost, yet the " unexhausted value " of such a building might not exceed that of a small bungalow. On the contrary, a tannery in full work might command in the open market a greater value than the sum originally expended upon it. In that case the relinquishing tenant would be entitled to claim the enhanced value should he be compelled to abandon his holding owing to an increase of his rent on revision.

In order to secure freedom from all suggestion of bias in the settlement should contention occur between the Executive (*i.e.* the Government) as landlord and the individual as tenant, all causes arising from such contention were, it was enacted, to fall within the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

The Government can, of course, acquire land required for public purposes, such as railways or public works, by expropriation on payment of compensation.

It appears to me that by this law the rights of the natives of Northern Nigeria as a community are adequately protected and that at the same time the interests of the native individual and that of the European capitalist are fostered. Increasing security is given proportionate to the private labour and capital expended on the land.

It is true that the provisions of the law render it comparatively easy for the Government to oust a tenant by expropriation, who occupies land for which there is not a great demand and on which the tenant has expended little or no capital on improvements, and for which the compensation payable is, therefore, low. It is also true that the average native small holding falls within this category. That is to say, the Government is granted very considerable powers in respect to the disposal of very much the largest proportion of the land and over the habitations of by far the largest portion of the inhabitants, where that land is required for a public purpose. I am certainly an advocate of the strict control of the Executive by legal statutes. At the same time it is not reasonable or expedient to assume that the Government will wantonly act so much in opposition to the interests of all concerned as to use its power of expropriation for no good public purpose. A certain degree of control is established by the general principle enunciated in the enactment to the effect that in all its actions the Government is bound to be guided by the interests of the native community generally. This would, I take it, be sufficient to render any flagrant misuse of this power revocable. Moreover, the local Government is controlled by the Secretary of State, who, in turn, is responsible to the House of Commons, so that in practice a very considerable check on the misuse of power by the Government exists. There is, I think, no great danger of the natives suffering in large blocks from any action of the Government. It is rather the individual who has expended capital and labour who is liable to suffer in such cases, and his interests are, as I have explained, very fully safeguarded by statute. There is, in my opinion, far more danger to be apprehended from the state of affairs which necessarily follows on the existence of freehold in land, where the individual native is liable, not to be expropriated from his holding by the Government in the public interests, but to be placed in circumstances which will lead him in good time to expropriate himself, not for the good of the public, but for the good of another private individual more cunning than he : where, too, a small group of crafty individuals may, indeed continually do, succeed in putting themselves into a position to dip deeply into the Public Funds by demanding exorbitant compensation for disturbance, compensation to which nothing which they have done in any way gives them a just claim. The actions of a Government in respect to individual rights are subject to the scrutiny of a thousand vigilant eyes, not so the actions of the individual *vis à vis* another individual. The individuals

of a community suspicious of the tyranny of Governments are yet tolerant, very generally and to an extraordinary degree, of the tyranny of one individual over another in the exercise of any power which may be construed as falling within "the rights of man." In no direction are they more tolerant than in respect to the great power which they willingly permit a small body of men to exert over the rest by means of the control of the one prime necessity of life, the land.



BORNU DANCERS.

The enactment which thus nationalised the land of Nigeria was regarded by many as being an innovation fraught with danger, and there were not wanting those who prophesied that no one would invest capital in a country thus administered, and that this law barred the way to or would certainly hinder all improvement and development on modern lines. The event, however, proved the contrary. As the law came to be understood it was realised that the interests of capital and of the industrious pioneer were amply protected, with the result that the demands for "Rights of Occupancy," as the leases are termed, has been so great as to hurry on the development of the country fully as rapidly as is expedient. So far from capital being

frightened away it is flowing in as quickly as anybody could wish. The native, of course, has had no reason to complain, or even to realise the existence of this law, as he continues to be governed on lines exactly fulfilling the traditions of his best rulers and chiefs from time immemorial.

Since the enactment of the "Land and Native Rights Proclamation" of 1910 in the form described, an amending proclamation has come into force, which, while not interfering with the general principles explained, does in one important particular jeopardise the ease and just manner in which it can be enforced in the future. It has always been a puzzle to me why it should have been thought necessary to modify a law to which so much thought and care had been given by so many officials of every grade, all thoroughly cognisant of the needs of the country, before time had elapsed sufficient to enable any further valuable judgment to be formed; more especially in view of the fact that such modification had not been suggested or called for by the general public, native or European. The modification to which I allude extends the extreme term which may elapse between the revisions of rent chargeable by the Government from seven to twenty years in the case of those areas granted for building purposes. The Governor may, that is to say, include in the terms of the "Right to Occupancy" a condition that the rent shall be revised every twenty years. He is not compelled to thus extend the term: he may make it less, he may make it annual if he so pleases, but the discretion is left to him. The Governor of a Colony is, of course, under the general orders of the Secretary of State, and, if a person in my position may make so bold as to express a hope in such a matter, I trust that the Governors may be directed to exert their discretion in the direction of inserting short rather than long intervals of revision. In theory and looking at the matter from an academic point of view it may be said that this point is not a vital one and that I am laying too much stress upon it. But I would urge that in practice it is a very important point, especially where a novel principle is introduced, as it is in this case. Colonial legislation is exceedingly liable to modification, any slight difficulty in the working of a law is prone to result in the enactment of an amendment. This may not be a great disadvantage in the case of enactments which deal with every day current business, but in the case of law which establishes a general principle, such as the one we are considering, an amendment may easily slip in, which, though it may pass unnoticed at the time, may contravene the whole principle.

Now the power, and the obligation, in the past of the Government to revise the rents would be to many about the most important provision in this law, and to some its principal drawback. Notwithstanding all the various measures taken to guide the Government in such revisions and to safeguard the individual from suffering on account of unreasonable re-assessment of his rent many might fight shy of such interference on the part of the State. In point of fact it has not so frightened capitalists, not so as to interfere with the development of the country, up to the present at all events ; but it might. For this very reason it was important that the general public should be assured that the exertion of this power on the part of the Government would not prejudice the interests of the tenant. It was therefore a matter of political expediency that the revisions should take place at short intervals in order to give a practical demonstration of the process as soon as possible.

Further, it is obviously expedient to avoid the necessity on the part of the Government to raise the rents on revision by very large proportions. Small, steady increases in rents would not be liable to cause misgiving or dislocation. As I have stated previously, the incremental increases in land values in new countries are liable to advance by leaps and bounds. For this reason the framers of the original Proclamation did not think it wise that the interval between the revisions should exceed seven years in any case ; anticipating that as a rule they would be shorter. In twenty years, the interval which may now elapse between the revisions in the case of sites leased for building purposes, land may very well have increased to three or five or even ten times its original value in Nigeria.

By the introduction of this amendment nothing is effected against the general principle of land nationalisation underlying the law but the way is laid open for practical difficulties and friction to occur in the administration of the law, with the possible result in the future of the whole principle being abandoned as unworkable in practice. Nor is there any sort of counterbalancing advantage to be hoped for from this amendment, either as regards the Government, the native tenant, or the European capitalist. The native it does not affect. The length of term during which the tenant remains undisturbed is not sufficient to approximate to a long lease, or a freehold, which is what the European capitalist generally clamours for ; so he is not satisfied. Finally the Government would, if the modification were put into force, be hampered (*a*) by lack of experience in re-assessing (*b*) by quarrels with its tenants in-

separable from large increases in rents demanded. I am happy to be able to write that up to the time I was compelled by ill-health to leave Nigeria at the end of 1916, no "Right of Occupancy" bearing a term of revision of more than seven years had been issued by the Government.

A further amendment to the original Proclamation was introduced at the same time. Again not one which affects the general principle underlying, but one which weakens, in my opinion, the practical efficacy of the law and lays it more open to destructive criticism by those who dislike the principle. We have seen that in its original form the "Land and Native Rights" Proclamation referred all questions that might arise between the Government as landlord and the individual as tenant to the decision of the Supreme Court. If a tenant thought that his rent had been incorrectly assessed or that the value of his unexhausted improvements had been underrated by the Government he could take the matter to the Courts. As the law now amended stands he cannot do so. A somewhat cumbersome machinery is erected by the amendment, which I need not stop to explain in full here; it suffices, I think, to prove my contention to say that in place of judges appointed by the Crown acting as arbiters between the executive and the individual, this power is to be wielded by executive officers appointed by one of the parties interested, *i.e.*, the Government; indeed the amendment goes so far as to leave the final decision as to the value of the unexhausted improvements to the Governor. It may again be urged that here the Secretary of State and finally the House of Commons can step in. But such ponderous machinery can only be put into motion in extreme cases in practice. I do not wish it to be inferred that the Governor cannot be entrusted with such powers; at the same time it was, I think, a more reasonable measure, and one which placed the Government in a much stronger position, to make use of the legal machinery already existing in the form of the Supreme Court for this purpose.

I have said that the enactment of the law was regarded with great suspicion by many. Curiously enough in no quarter has it been more criticised and the underlying principle more opposed than by the natives all along the coast who have received an education on European lines. It must be remembered that practically every one of them is a freeholder in the modern sense of the term and further was born and brought up in those areas where freehold has already emerged. I do not wish to suggest that all for that reason are incapable of arriving at right conclusions on this subject, but human nature

being what it is the fact that they are, generally speaking, interested parties is not to be lost sight of when their evidence is being scrutinised. Being land owners and in some cases collecting rents from others as landlords they are naturally somewhat shy of lending any countenance to a measure which, if applied generally, might deprive them of valuable interests, some of which they may have inherited and some of which they may have purchased with the produce of their own thrift and energy in the various fields of human activity. To these I would say that I cannot believe that any grounds whatever exist to fear, certainly I should be the last to advocate, that any Government measure should be enacted which would deprive the individual native of his fairly acquired vested interests in land, more particularly seeing that such interests would have been secured under the guidance and with the sanction, tacit or otherwise, of the Government itself. In Northern Nigeria we had a *tabula rasa* to work upon ; as I have explained, private vested interests in land were unknown to native law and custom and the measure crystallising these laws was enacted before such rights had had time to make their appearance. So the position was a simple one. Far different would the conditions be were it proposed to apply the "Land and Native Rights Proclamation" to the whole of Nigeria for instance. In the South vested rights in land have been fully established for generations and I should imagine (of course I am expressing a strictly private and personal opinion) that such areas would have to be left outside the operation of any act by which the Government desired to establish native law and custom with regard to land on a permanent basis.

The native critics whom I have mentioned have not been content to protect existing vested rights in land acquired under the ægis of the British government only, but have gone further and have claimed that native law and custom does recognise the existence of private property in land. With regard to the nineteen or twenty millions of natives in Nigeria I am fully prepared to prove, with native witnesses, to the reasonable enquirer, that such a form of land tenure is strange to the native mind, and I can hardly believe that a rule which applies to so large a concourse of natives would not be found to apply to the comparatively small populations in the neighbouring Colonies and Protectorates of Sierra Leone and the Gold Coast for instance. Personally I would go so far, if the reader will permit me to express a private opinion not based on close personal observation, as to say that nowhere among the coloured natives of Africa wil

it be found that the institution of freehold in land had made its appearance before the natives came into close contact with Europeans.

Where the enquirer who superficially examines the question, or who being already prejudiced is determined to prove the existence of freehold, is liable to go astray is in assuming that security of tenure on the part of the tenant of the State is tantamount to freehold. As I have tried to show, absolute security of tenure and the completest enjoyment of all improvements on a site can exist, and do exist under the "Land and Native Rights Proclamation, and at the same time the land may remain strictly "national," with the community as sole landlord. It is true that we often, indeed for the most part, find that a farm has been from time immemorial cultivated by one and the same family of natives, going down from father to son. But this does not prove that they were freeholders in the sense in which we use the term. We must not overlook the fact that innumerable tribal customs, including those which the defence of the tribe from armed attack from outside rendered necessary, imposed obligations on each occupant and that it was because such obligations had been duly fulfilled by the succeeding tenants, because, in short, the family had been for many generations good and law abiding citizens, that they enjoyed the security in which we find them. If anybody should ask me to credit the existence of a contrary state of affairs among an African tribe, that for instance in Kumasi before the advent of the European an individual native occupier could flout the native customs, refuse to turn out panoplied for war when danger threatened, refuse to pay the various taxes, presents, etc., due to the chiefs, without being very quickly dispossessed; or that he was at liberty to sell his farm to anybody he chose, the member of a neighbouring tribe for instance, without getting the permission of his chief, or finally that he was at liberty to allow valuable land to lie fallow and useless when it was urgently required by the rest of the tribe, excluding others from cultivating it, then all I could say would be that none but the most conclusive evidence borne out by an examination of both the individual and the area would enable me to accept this as a true description, so much would such a state of affairs differ from any which I have hitherto experienced as existing among natives.

If I may venture to proffer advice—I think that those natives who are giving the matter attention might assume, at all events until some indication may appear which points to the contrary, that their private vested rights in land are not in danger from

any action on the part of the Government, and that they might usefully turn their attention to the very great danger which threatens those vested rights in land, of a far wider description, which the native communities as a whole undoubtedly possess, and which must be assured to them if their future well-being is to be secured and protected from the gradual appearance of the European institution of freehold in land, whereby the many will eventually be reduced to live on the sufferance of the few.

NOTE.—My Yoruba friends will, I know, say that in their case the land belonged to the family and not to the tribe. It is true that if a Yoruba individual misbehaved (before our advent) he would be dispossessed and that that portion of the family land which he occupied would revert not to the State (the tribe), but to the family. This does not touch the argument, however. If a whole family misbehaved (such cases may have been very rare) the whole family would certainly have been severely dealt with and driven off the land, which would then have reverted to the State.



A CHAT ON THE BANK OF THE BENUE RIVER AT SUNSET.



APPROACHING THE BAUCHI ESCARPMENT.

CHAPTER IX.

PONDERATION.

DRINK.

No work, however unpretentious, relative to West African affairs can omit all mention of the consumption of imported, European, fermented liquors by natives. In the first place the principal revenue of all the West African Colonies and Protectorates, with one exception, depend, or depended until the war broke out and rendered the potato of Germany unobtainable for its manufacture, on customs duties levied on imported gin. Nigeria alone collected a comfortable million pounds annually from this service. Very much the largest proportion of the produce of West Africa was exchanged for this commodity, if so it may be termed. Controversy has hotly raged round the subject for years and, unless the war has a permanent effect, will probably continue so to rage. Commissions have sat and will sit again, figuratively speaking, on the gin case. Individuals of all classes, officials, administrative and medical, missionaries, travellers, and even some traders have condemned gin. On the other hand individuals of all classes, excepting missionaries,

have stepped out in its defence as a mild, harmless, and in certain circumstances of damp and fog even valuable, restorative. A drop of "what killed mother" in England is, they say, the very thing the African parent wants. The great class which loves to see fair play has said "If you have your glass of whisky and soda why should the native not have his drop of gin?"

The large group in England and America which takes an academic interest in the affairs of aborigines has ceaselessly inveighed against the trade. As in every case where an opinion is expressed by persons not materially interested in the matter that opinion has carried but an appearance of weight. It has been deferred to, treated gravely and with respect, but nothing has been done. The practical man of the world, merchant and administrator, both directly interested, and the ultimate source of all power, the man-in-the-street, has not moved. While admitting that alcoholic excess is deplorable and by no means to be encouraged he asks whether it is certain that natives drink to excess. Anybody who has had to deal with medical men as witnesses in the case of a "drunk" in the Courts knows how chary a doctor is of saying upon his oath that the physical state of the accused is due and can be due to drink only, and to no other cause. If it is difficult to obtain indisputable evidence of a single case it may well be assumed that it is impossible to obtain such evidence when a whole community is passed under review. If we have to wait until it has been clearly proven, as in a Court of Law, that some twenty million natives drink more than is good for them before we do anything to stop it then we may as well, to use a colloquialism, "give gin best"; and if some other vice comes along such as opium-taking then after long discussion we may assume that we shall give that best too.

What between the great commercial interests, the practical and cautious administrator, and the man who loves to see fair play all round, gin has won hands down so far in Africa. It took no less than the greatest war in history to shake its position. Even now cavillers are to be found who say that the stocks in Africa were so great that they have served to tide over the shortage in the import and that this fact alone explains the obviously happy appearance of the natives, who would otherwise have wilted under the African sun, or in the African swamp, owing to lack of gin.

One exception has been mentioned in a previous paragraph of a Protectorate which has never been invaded by the square-faced gin-bottle. When the Royal Niger Company under the Governorship of Sir George Taubman Goldie first entered into

extensive mercantile and, shall we term them "political," relations with the eight to ten million inhabitants of the territories known as Northern Nigeria they found a large proportion of them to be Muhammadans and teetotallers. It is a never-to-be forgotten example of commercial probity and disinterestedness that by a self-denying ordinance the company preserved this satisfactory state of affairs and the importation of spirits for sale to natives has never been permitted. To my mind the fact that the ten million natives of Northern Nigeria have been and are perfectly happy and healthy proves that the withholding of gin from any other group of ten million natives wherever situated would be if not a benefit at all events no great hardship.

The champions of gin (using this curt designation to cover all spirituous imported liquor) say that if the natives did not drink gin they would drink some other intoxicating liquor of their own manufacture. This is true up to a point. If left to themselves entirely, a large proportion would probably be drinking intoxicants, such as palm wine, native beer made with guinea corn, or one of the many fermented drinks which they know how to make. It was only the Muslim population, or those natives who had come under the domination of a Muslim power, who were teetotallers when the Europeans came on the scene, in recent historical times at all events. But when one is dogmatising about African tribes and assuming to say what they would or would not do if left to themselves, one must I think, take into consideration large blocks of time. Although it is fairly certain, that is to say as far as oral tradition carries us, that for the past thousand years African tribes have used fermented liquor, yet it is equally certain that at some time in the dim past they were not in possession of the knowledge necessary for its manufacture and that at that time all were teetotallers. This fact, taken in conjunction with the fact that the teetotal tribes professing Islam were, until the white man appeared, rapidly conquering the drinking tribes, would lead one to suppose that it is not at all improbable that had these people been left entirely to themselves, aloof from Islam and Christianity, some teetotal tribe might have arisen which would have conquered the drinking tribes and compelled them to revert to the teetotal state as have done the Muslim conquerors. So I do not think it safe to assume that the African drinks by nature, or that any valid excuse for our action in facilitating the importation of spirits among natives can be based on this hypothesis.

The territories of Nigeria to-day can be divided into the

following alcoholic zones. All the Southern Provinces, an area of about one hundred thousand square miles occupied by about nine million people, are penetrated by the gin traffic. Those that cannot afford gin or cannot afford as much gin as they want, drink the fermented juice of the palm also. For the sake of brevity let us call them the gin drinkers. That portion of the Northern Provinces which is Pagan (non-Muslim) is all the Southern part consisting of about 130,000 square miles and populated by about four million inhabitants, manufacturers of native beer; let us call them beer drinkers. The remainder of the Northern Provinces, which is Muslim with a population of about six million inhabitants and an area of 120,000 square miles, is teetotal. The importation of spirits for sale to natives into the whole of the two areas last mentioned (making a total of 250,000 square miles and a population of about ten million inhabitants) is prohibited. The sale of imported beer to natives is, however, not prohibited.

The reader may have gathered that I am not a champion of the trade in gin and I will make so bold as to record an opinion to the effect that the consumption of alcoholic liquor by natives of all kinds is wholly bad, and, further, that it is an evil which not only should, but can be averted. Perhaps I may state that I am not a teetotaler and I am not convinced that the consumption of alcohol by Europeans is on the whole harmful to them. But I think it is harmful in the case of native populations for the following reasons:—

The first and most convincing of these, to my mind, is that the teetotal Arab Muslim, so long as he adhered to the tenets of his creed strictly, was successful in war to an extraordinary degree. I believe that this success was chiefly due to abstinence from intoxicants and that the decline of the Muslim power has been caused by laxity in observing this rule. How firm the early Kaliphas were on the enforcement of abstinence, the following extract from Washington Irving's "Lives of Mahomet and his Successors" will show.

"The interval of repose in the luxurious city of Damascus, and the general abundance of the fertile regions of Syria, begun to have their effect upon the Moslem troops, and the good Abu Obeidah was specially scandalised at discovering that they were lapsing into the use of wine, so strongly forbidden by the prophet. He mentioned the prevalence of this grievous sin in his letter to the Caliph, who read it in the mosque in presence of his officers. 'By Allah!' exclaimed the abstemious Omar; 'these fellows are only fit for poverty and hard fare; what is

to be done with these wine-bibbers?' 'Let him who drinks wine,' replied Ali promptly, 'receive twenty bastinadoes on the soles of his feet.' 'Good, it shall be so,' rejoined the Caliph; and he wrote to that effect to the commander-in-chief. On receiving the letter, Abu Obeidah forthwith summoned the offenders, and had the punishment inflicted for the edification of his troops; he took the occasion to discant on the enormity of the offence, and to exhort such as had sinned in private to come forward like good Moslems, make public confession, and submit to the bastinado in token of repentance; whereupon many, who had indulged in secret potations, moved by his paternal exhortation, avowed their crime and their repentance, and were set at ease in their consciences by a sound bastinadoing and the forgiveness of the good Abu Obeidah."

Not only did the abstaining Arabs rapidly reduce the drinking tribes in their neighbourhood but those tribes on which they imposed their rule of abstinence rapidly secured an ascendancy also. When a section of a coloured African tribe came under their influence and became teetotallers that section rapidly dominated the drinking section. It is often stated, and I think truly stated, that the Muslim influence has done more in the past and is doing more to-day to raise the native tribes of Africa than any other, and that the Muhammadans are stronger in mind and body than the rest. The sole reason for this superiority may be traced, I think, to the fact that Islam tends to foster abstinence, whereas all other influences, in spite of the efforts of Christian missionaries, tend to foster the use of alcohol in some form or other.

Further reasons which appear to me to render abstention necessary to the development of the native character and body are to be found in the physical characteristics of the African and the conditions in which he has lived and is likely to live for many generations. The robust physical constitution of the African renders him capable of enjoying existence to a remarkable degree, the *joie de vivre* is strong within him. He is able to live happily and contentedly without difficulty, his simple wants are easily satisfied, he is thoroughly capable of enjoying in an unconscious or subconscious manner the benefits which Nature has showered on the human race. He will be happy and contented where his European brother would be at the best bored to an extent to render life unbearable. Added to this he lives in a land of plenty where the real necessities of life can be acquired with very slight effort. All the circumstances of his existence therefore, tend to render him a happy, but purposeless, irresponsible individual.

It must, I think, be evident that the use of intoxicants of all sorts by individuals thus situated cannot fail to be far more liable to lead to excess than is the use of intoxicants by individuals situated in conditions of stress, as are the inhabitants of Europe, for instance. Among the civilised peoples inhabiting the temperate zones, generally speaking, a man must work or starve, himself and his family. The more he drinks, the less he can work, the more likely he is to starve. This, the main restraint is, generally speaking, a state of affairs strange to the Africans and, until the population has enormously increased and the stress of life been introduced, will remain strange to him. Before the advent of European control over African races the only stress to which the African was likely to be subjected was the danger of being conquered in war: this we have withdrawn. There is left, therefore, no restraint from without operating against over-indulgence by the native. Any such restraint must come from within in each individual case. The African must depend entirely on his self-respect to ward off the danger. Fortunately the African is sensitive in a remarkable degree to the opinions of his fellows: he is excessively sensitive to ridicule of any sort, and this is, to a certain extent, a safeguard. But, alas! such self-respect is rapidly lost under the influence of alcohol, and once he has thrown off the fear of ridicule, there is hardly any other influence at work to urge him to regain his own respect or the respect of others.

In such circumstances it appears to me quite inexcusable that the whole force of the machinery of every kind at the disposal of the Governments which have assumed the responsibility of directing the destinies of tens of millions of African natives should not be employed towards the protection of those natives from the dangers attending the use of alcoholic stimulants. It appears to me the more inexcusable inasmuch as the Muslim has already exerted such protection, and has proved, by actual practice, that no serious inconvenience, but on the contrary a benefit accrues, both to the conquered and the conqueror, to the strict enforcement of abstention.

I propose, with the reader's permission, to discuss the map of alcoholic distribution in Nigeria, taking the point of view that we should do all we can to cause the native to become a total abstainer. To consider, in the first place, the group towards which we have incurred no great responsibility so far, the group which I have described as the beer drinking section which inhabits the mountainous districts in the Southern part of the Northern Provinces. These people have manufactured an alcoholic beverage

from a kind of millet, called guinea-corn, for very many generations; certainly during the past thousand years. They are in a very primitive stage, some stark naked, some were cannibals until quite recently. Generally speaking, they are an entirely robust, well developed race and remarkably free from disease of all sorts. The healthy, primitive life they lead enables their constitutions to resist the effects of very great excesses in the use of alcohol until later middle or old age is reached. Although they consume a fair amount all the year round it is at the time of the harvest festivals that they indulge in veritable orgies of beer drinking. The extent of their orgies must be seen to be appreciated. I have entered a village at 8 a.m. and found every one of the two or three hundred inhabitants, men, women, boys and girls, and children in arms, all in a state of drunkenness, mostly quite insensible. Such excesses are not of long duration, as, in two or three weeks a good part of the year's harvest has been consumed in making beer, and fear of shortage of food later in the year checks the further manufacture. Among these tribes it is a very general practice for the women to grow their own crops of beans from which beer cannot be made, in order to avoid the danger of famine owing to the use of all grain stores for the brewing of beer.

Now what is our position *vis-a-vis* these people? Had we not arrived on the scene they would either have been conquered by the Muslims from the North and compelled to cease drinking, even if they were not carried into slavery, or, if they had continued to resist the Muslim among the fastnesses of the hills, they would have gone on drinking possibly for another thousand years. We have stepped in and protected them from further conquest, but we are gradually submitting them to the influences of civilisation. All kinds of natives are now entering these territories which were absolutely closed to them a few years ago. The pagan tribesmen are themselves wandering afield. They are beginning to wear clothes of sorts. Government officials visit them, assess them and interfere with the old tribal customs. Under all these influences they are changing. Will that change be for the better or the worse? Will their constitutions stand such drinking bouts under the new conditions? Can we do anything to raise them in the scale of civilisation if all, chief, elders, men, women and children are dead drunk for appreciable periods every year? Can we get them to take life at all seriously in such conditions? I think it will be admitted that we cannot and that, unless we can effect a reform in this direction, we shall, by our interference and by forcing them into contact with civilisation, only hasten

their gradual decay and disappearance from the face of the globe. Moreover, in the course of this decay they will infect the tribes in their neighbourhood. I am fully aware that such a reform involves no easy task and I should be the last to suggest any rash attempt to coerce these pagans before the ground has been prepared. To show how primitive is the condition of some of these tribes, I would note only one curious custom. It is usual in some parts of the Bauchi plateau for the males of two villages at stated times to exchange their domiciles *en masse* for a season ; the women remaining to receive the guests. With people in this stage of civilisation it is evidently necessary to go slow.

It would be out of place here to attempt to outline the measures which should be taken towards this end, but I plead for the adoption of the general principle of eradicating the use of alcohol among natives as a definite policy to be adopted by the Government and to be put into effect when and where it is feasible to do so. In case it should be argued that this is an Utopian policy, I would point out that the Filane Emirs did, to a great extent, succeed in putting this policy into force among these very people.

Leaving the belt of pagan beer drinkers, I would turn to the teetotal area of the North. A very large proportion of these areas was populated by pagan beer drinkers so lately as 110 years ago. The Muhammadan conquerors were abstainers and on the whole, sometimes more and sometimes less, put a stop to this custom. Much depended on the character of a particular Emir; some, no doubt, were less zealous than others, but, generally speaking, especially in the neighbourhood of the great Muslim centres such as Sokoto and Kano beer drinking was almost stamped out. There has been since our occupation of these territories a tendency for beer drinking to increase. Our law, though it prohibits the sale of imported liquor to natives, does not prohibit the brewing of native beer ; further, it permits the sale of such beer under licence. At one time a number of these licences were issued by Government ; thus we even retrograded from Muslim practice in this direction. At all Government Stations, especially where troops were quartered, native beer shops were licensed. It was argued that a number of our troops were pagans, accustomed to drink beer and that this rendered such institutions necessary. The "fair play" school were very much to the fore in their defence, arguing that it was a shame to deprive the native of his "pot of beer." It was proposed that the native police should supervise these shops and that the owners should be liable to lose their licences if they permitted

drunkenness, just as if we were dealing with European Police and Publicans. Now the holder of a "Native liquor licence" was generally such a person as this :—



A TYPICAL NATIVE LIQUOR LICENCE HOLDER IN NORTHERN NIGERIA,

and the Police were found to be constantly drunk, because they could get any quantity of beer gratis from the occupiers of the premises they were ordered to supervise. Further, such compounds were found to harbour prostitutes and thieves and to be gambling dens. Matters finally came to such a pass that the issue of native liquor licences was stopped; but the law was not altered. I am aware that in some parts of the Muslim areas pagan tribes are to be found living in conditions approximating to those described in the beer drinking area, and I admit that in such cases we should introduce reforms gradually. But over the bulk of the Muslim areas I think our laws should strictly support and enforce the Muslim tenet of total abstinence.

The Muslim areas are not invaded by native beer only; they are being invaded to an ever increasing degree by gin. Unless a radical change in policy should be adopted this evil will assume great proportions in the near future. Gin (and, as previously stated, I include all European intoxicating drink under this conveniently short title) may not be sold to natives in the Northern Provinces. It may be imported under licence, however, and sold to "others than natives." Now the number of persons

"others than natives" is daily increasing. The number of Europeans is becoming very large. To meet their needs alone a large quantity of gin is yearly imported. Besides the Europeans there is a continual influx of coloured individuals, who would be termed natives in ordinary parlance, but who are not natives for the purpose of the prohibiting ordinance. These are Africans, more or less educated, and who have adopted European costume and are well acquainted with European laws and customs. They come for the most part from what I have termed the gin areas, where they have been in the habit of buying a bottle of spirits just as they would in England. Immense difficulty has been met with in finding a suitable legal definition so that the sale of spirits to such, whom I would term the "sophisticated" natives, should be permissible and prohibited in the case of the "unsophisticated," *i.e.*, natives untouched by European civilisation. The definition finally adopted to describe those to whom gin may not be sold was "being a native subject to the jurisdiction of a Native Court"; not an altogether satisfactory solution; but the subject bristles with difficulties which I need not go into here.

The upshot is, that what with European officials, traders, miners, etc., and their staffs of coloured individuals who may be served with drinks, the drinking population in the Muslim teetotal areas, and in the Pagan beer drinking areas too, is already very large and is likely to increase. The amount of drink imported for their satisfaction is correspondingly great and is increasing. Now let the Government do what it will some of this spirit must leak. In point of fact we know it does leak. What with native clerks handling dozens of cases of gin, counting the bottles, taking out the broken bottles (and now and then a full one to oblige a friend), and with Europeans who leave half empty bottles about, it is quite out of the question that any supervision by Government could prevent leakage. So a certain number of natives of every class, Muslims as well, are getting a little drink and are gradually acquiring the habit of drinking, not necessarily to excess, but just a little. This, going on steadily year by year, will gradually build up a large class of natives in the teetotal zone who have acquired the habit of using alcohol. Once they have acquired the habit they will of course be at every sort of pains to continue to get drink, and presently it will be beyond the power of the Government to check the evil.

It is, in my opinion, the first of our duties as a protecting power to take steps to prevent, at all events, the Muslims from

degenerating, in this respect, to a state below that in which we found them. So long as spirits sufficient to supply the growing needs of the European population and the coloured folk who come from the drinking areas may be imported, by no possible means can the Government prevent leakage and sale to the natives. Many years of work as a Resident in attempting to do so has convinced me fully of the impossibility of the task, and I think that every Resident will bear me out in saying this. What then can we do? There is a remedy, but it is a drastic one. A general reform of wide scope is required which I will discuss presently.

Turning from the beer drinking area of the Northern Provinces, which, as we have seen, is liable to contaminate the more northerly teetotal area (and is itself being contaminated by the gin drinking area to the South), and from the teetotal area which is also being contaminated by drink imported for the use of Europeans and their coloured staffs to the gin drinking areas themselves. These are inhabited to a great extent by natives of the most primitive description, resembling the beer drinking pagans of the Northern Provinces excepting in so far as they inhabit dense forests in place of hills and drink the fermented juice of the palm. The majority, excepting the chiefs, cannot afford to drink gin except on special occasions, such as marriages, feasts, funeral "orgies," etc. We bear no responsibility *vis-a-vis* their drinking habits, as they were drinking long before the advent of the European of any nation in these parts. Lately we have even made the cutting down of palm trees, for the purpose, illegal. It must be understood that the control exerted by Government over these tribes is, for the most part, not such as to permit any strict enforcement of the law at present, and of course considerable patience must be exerted to avoid collision and bloodshed in the case of these primitive folk, as in the case of the Northern pagans. Still, it is a move in the right direction, and every consideration, material as well as moral, urges us to enforce the law strictly. The palm tree is the principal source of wealth of the Lower Niger Basin; produce of the palm to a value of from four to five millions of pounds sterling a year is already obtained, and it is probable that when means of transport, *i.e.*, railways, have been extended so as to enable the whole of the existing trees to be used to their fullest extent, the value of the whole crop will not be less than twenty to twenty-five millions of pounds sterling annually. This is a valuable property well worth looking after. Moreover, the employment, on an extended scale at all events, of experts is not necessary

to register the palm trees. This work can quite well, can best, be done by Political officers in the course of their ordinary duties. An increased staff is required, at all events, until efficient Native Administrations, as described in another chapter, have been evolved.

Besides these primitive people, who drink chiefly palm wine, there is a very large population which drinks gin. Gin is consumed in two fashions which may be defined as domestic and ceremonial. Those who drink domestically take alcohol daily, just as does the man-in-the-street at home. Of these, some of course drink moderately, some immoderately, and some take rather more than is good for them. But for the fact that the African is rather more prone to excess than the European for the reasons previously explained they are much in the same state as the populations of Europe.

Here, in parenthesis, I would note that many travellers, writers of books on Africa, and people who may be described as unprejudiced witnesses, having heard, and seen a great deal written, about the evils of drink among natives, have apparently expected to find on landing the entire population of Sierra Leone or Lagos in much the state of universal intoxication as I have described as existing at the times of the harvest revels in the pagan beer-drinking villages. These, on arrival, seeing the whole native population, as far as they could judge, to be in a state of perfect sobriety have been so disappointed that they have characterised the agitation against drink as being a pack of lies, consciously or unconsciously promulgated by a set of cranks. Persons, however, who have spent years working in close contact with natives know how much alcohol, even of the strongest description, a healthy native can carry without any very obvious effect. They know, too, how infinitely better a man in the main is the native who does not drink at all than is the native who drinks even moderately only.

To return: besides the habit of drinking domestically there is the even more pernicious habit of drinking gin ceremonially. Gradually, and to an ever growing extent, it has become the custom of a native to display his importance, his wealth, and especially his official position by the distribution of gin to his guests and followers on all occasions of public ceremonies, at marriages and funerals, feast days, etc. A man's popularity, the respect in which he is held, are measured by, and depend chiefly on, the number of gin cases used on occasions of public festivity. It needs no great stretch of the imagination to gauge to what extent this may become an evil in the case of natives of the

better class to whom popularity and the respect of other natives is the very breath of life. In this manner the habit of gin drinking is undermining not only the constitutions but the financial position of the best and most influential natives. With regard to this side of the question there can be no doubt, nor can the most stalwart champion of the "trade" fail to admit the extent and growing extent of this evil.

Granted that the introduction of spirits among native populations is an evil—and I think it may be said truly that adding the stalwart opponents of drink to those who think it would be as well to do without it if we can, these together greatly outnumber the champions of gin—what steps can be taken to remedy the evil? and if it cannot be remedied at all events to ameliorate conditions?

It might be suggested that the sale of liquor to natives should be rendered illegal throughout, just as it is in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, including under the term "native" all individuals of colour. This is a measure which I do not think would be feasible. It would certainly be strongly, and I think rightly, opposed by the large number of educated and well-to-do natives to be found all along the coast of West Africa. Some of these have taken University degrees in England and they would all resent, and with good reason, such a colour distinction as this. "Why should we who in every respect resemble Europeans be treated as children like this?" they would say. Nor would this large and influential class view with any approval a measure by which the Government should try to enforce total abstinence on the less educated natives in their immediate vicinity. They would oppose such an innovation to-day on these grounds, first as establishing a degrading distinction between white and coloured, and next as being a measure which it would be impossible to enforce, on account of just that leakage of spirits which I have described as occurring in the Northern Provinces. It is true that educated natives have not taken any exception to the prohibition of sale to natives in the Northern Provinces, but these Provinces are remote from the coast, were occupied very recently, and the prohibition was enforced at once as the territories were occupied.

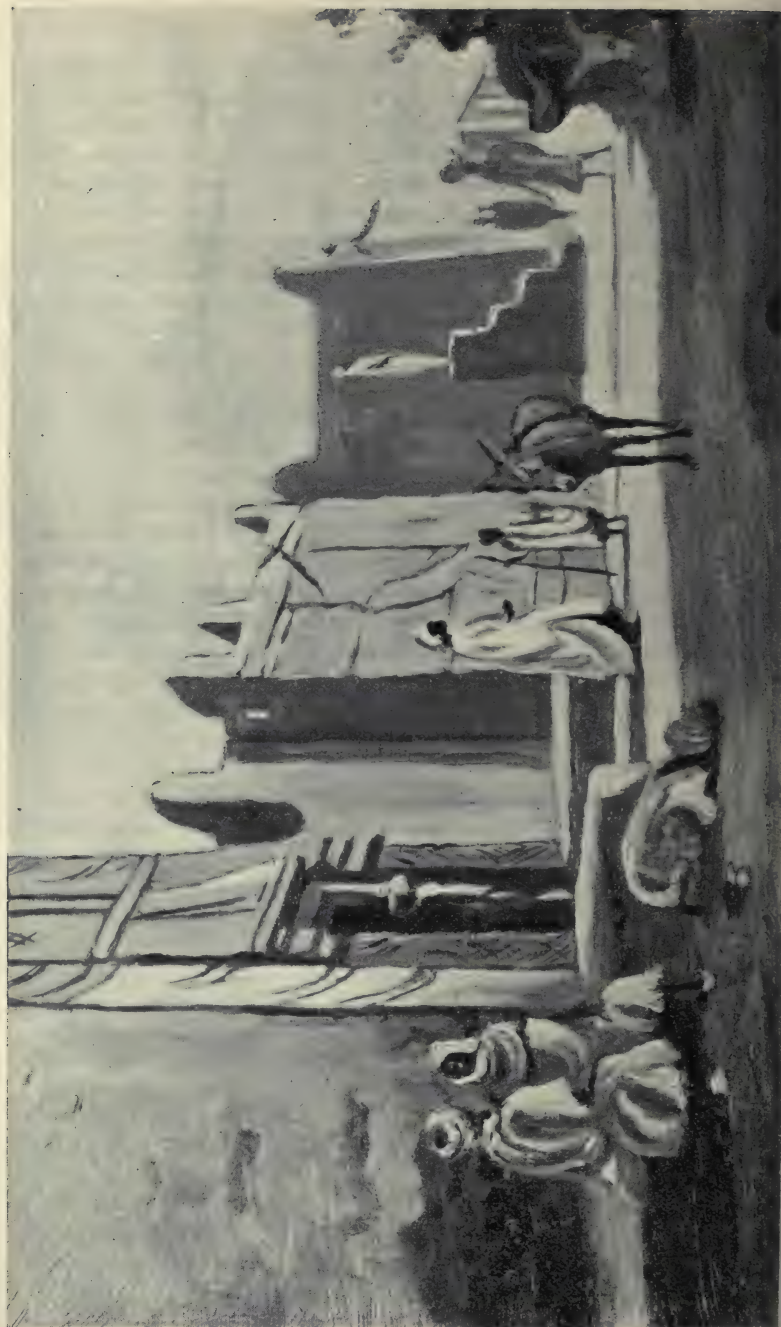
If we decide that it is our duty to check the use of alcohol among natives there is only one measure by which we can, I am convinced, do so effectively. We must do without alcohol ourselves whilst living in native countries. The prestige of the "white man" is still sufficiently operative, I think, among all classes of natives, with the exception of an inconsiderable

minority which may safely and properly be ignored, as to cause such a self-denying ordinance if adopted for all indiscriminately to be accepted without demur by the respectable natives. Why such a measure should be inconceivable I cannot understand. Perhaps the reader will permit me to repeat that I am not, and never have been, a teetotaller, nor am I convinced that total abstention from alcohol is necessary to enable a European to carry out his duties efficiently in Tropical Africa. At the same time, speaking as an ex-official, I am quite certain that the question as to whether I should or should not have to become a teetotaller never entered my mind when I decided to enter the civil service in Nigeria, and I am quite certain that I should not have given up the idea of entering that service or have thrown it up after I had entered it, because circumstances made it necessary for me to give up alcohol for a time. I cannot imagine that my case is a peculiar one, or that such a trifling matter as this would exercise a prevailing influence over any official or trader when deciding as to whether he will proceed to or stay in Nigeria. It must not be forgotten in this connection that a large number of people, including not a few doctors, hold that abstention from alcohol, unless taken under medical orders, in the tropics would benefit Europeans. The prohibition of the import of all alcohol, except as medical comforts, would in no wise damage, hardly seriously inconvenience, and according to some authorities actually benefit, the European. Who then, is to be so badly treated by such a measure? "Trade may suffer" it may be said. Trade might suffer a little at first, but certainly not in my opinion permanently. The African would not stop cultivating or cease collecting palm produce permanently because he could not get gin in exchange. He would soon acquire the habit of demanding other commodities. The revenue of the Government, in a like manner, would not suffer permanently. Who then, is to be inconvenienced if the last objection, *i.e.*, any differentiation of the legal position between the white and coloured populations should be withdrawn? I cannot answer this question.

Should the prohibition of the import of all alcoholic liquor be considered the extravagant proposal of a crank, I would submit that the import of all distilled spirits might be prohibited, allowing light wines and light beers only to enter the country. I do not personally advocate this compromise, as the alcoholic habit, once acquired by natives, will lead them to go to great trouble and expense to procure strong spirits. But as a *pis aller* I submit that it would be a good move in the right direction. If it should be considered rash to attempt such a measure as

applying to the whole of the West African Coast it might, at least, be made to apply to those Northern areas into which spirits may not be imported for sale to natives but may be so imported for sale to Europeans and certain coloured folk, and where a position, as I have tried to show, is now being created which will in time render the restriction unavailing. Here the interests of the liquor trade are infinitesimal, and the number of Europeans as compared to natives very small. What argument can be brought against the complete prohibition of the import of any kind of strong spirit into the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, except as a medicine to be administered only under medical supervision?

There would appear to be no more appropriate time than this for the Government to move in this matter, as the prolonged duration of the war has exploded the idea that the African native cannot live without gin. He has been compelled to do so to a great extent by circumstances entirely out of our control. Further, the action of the legislatures in England, France, Russia and especially America in the direction of controlling the manufacture and consumption of alcohol, the outcome of national needs, is likely to have a lasting effect. Civilised people will probably tolerate the action of Government in controlling the liberty of action of the individual in this direction to an increasing extent in the near future. Why then, should we not control the liberty of the "protected" African for his own advantage in a similar manner? I cannot say. But I am aware that nine readers out of ten will not agree with the views above stated.



CALL TO PRAYER, KANO CITY.



A YOUNG FILANE EMIR WITH ESCORT.

CHAPTER X.

PONDERATION.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

JUSTICE is administered amongst the native communities of British West Africa through two channels, that is to say, the judges may be European Officers presiding over British Courts where British law is administered, or selected natives appointed to sit as judges in Native Courts, where native law and custom are administered. To a certain extent, to a very limited degree, native law and custom are taken into consideration in the British Courts, and sometimes again, to a very limited degree, Native Courts put into force local ordinances and proclamations.

To take the first group, where the judges are British officers, a further classification can be made. The judges may be qualified barristers appointed to act as judges and without any other official duties ; these constitute the Supreme Court. Or, judicial powers may be entrusted to political or administrative officers—whose principal duties are not connected with the law courts.

In Nigeria the political officers preside over what are called the Provincial Courts. The latter arrangement has been subject to a great deal of criticism, not only in the case of the Nigerian Administration, but wherever a like system has been adopted.

The wielding of judicial together with executive powers by one and the same officer it is argued has been found to hinder the administration of justice in the past. To secure perfectly upright men and unprejudiced judges the two powers must be kept rigorously separate. If it is unavoidable for financial or other reasons to unite the two in the hands of one individual then the system should be regarded as the lesser of evils and as one to be got rid of as soon as may be.

Generally speaking the tendency has been for some years past to assume this to be true, to relieve the executive officers of judicial duties and to appoint what are termed "proper" judges over the native communities subject to our rule. Nigeria has been an exception. When the amalgamation of the ten million inhabitants of what used to be called Northern Nigeria with the nine million inhabitants of Southern Nigeria under one administration took place, the system in force in Northern was adopted for Southern Nigeria also, and the political officers were entrusted with extended judicial powers. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court was to a great degree curtailed. This measure, thoroughly supported by the administrative officers throughout the two Dependencies, has not passed without a due share of criticism, and many well-meaning persons, with the best intentions, are even to-day trying to upset it.

The procedure in a Provincial Court must certainly appear most extraordinary to a person unacquainted with the difficulties connected with the administration of natives. A trial before a political officer is conducted as follows:—

The officer receives a complaint, or a statement, that a crime has occurred. He weighs this statement and decides whether further action is necessary. Assuming that he thinks the charge well founded he carries out a preliminary investigation, much on the same lines that the police work upon in England. He summons all persons likely to be able to throw light upon it, and examines them. Given that he finds good grounds to exist for supposing a breach of the law to have occurred he then summons the accused and hears what he has got to say. It may well be that the accused has a satisfactory explanation to offer or that he may be able to indicate others who can prove the charge to be obviously ill-founded.

Should the officer decide at this stage that the accused cannot be guilty the case is not gone on with. But say that the officer decide to the contrary; he next opens the case formally in the Provincial Court. The witnesses for the prosecution are examined in chief by him, of course in the presence of the accused; he

then cross-examines them for the defence. The accused also may cross-examine in his own defence.

I may say here, in parenthesis, that this latter procedure, based on the procedure in the Courts at home, is totally strange to natives. The native understands the judge asking every kind of question, or even, in rare cases, that the judges should ask certain questions at the request of the accused, but the idea of the accused in the Court cross-questioning witnesses is quite foreign to his notions of what is fitting.

To return to the trial. The witnesses for the prosecution having been disposed of the officer calls the witnesses for the defence. These he examines in chief, and cross-examines, and the accused also puts any questions he likes. Finally the accused is invited to tell his own story. On the facts thus elicited the officer, having filled all the functions of the police, the judge, the jury, the counsel for the prosecution and the counsel for the defence, gives his judgment.

If the sentence be under two years a brief record of the proceedings is entered in a Cause List. The Cause Lists are sent to Headquarters once a month and are reviewed by a Lieutenant-Governor, with the assistance of a legal adviser who is a barrister. If the sentence be over two years typed copies of the judge's notes are sent to Headquarters and are reviewed in the same way. If the sentence be one of death these notes are sent to Headquarters and are reviewed by the Governor-General-in-Council. Should a maladministration of justice appear to have occurred the Lieutenant-Governor, or Governor-General-in-Council, interferes in the manner deemed necessary.

To many people such a mode of conducting trials, especially where the judicial officer is not a trained barrister, as is generally the case, appears open to great objections and they advocate the appointment of a suitable number of judges on the staff of the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, and the concentration of all judicial work within the jurisdiction of that Court.

I think that they are wrong for the following reasons: The administration of justice, granted complete knowledge, is a simple matter; common honesty, absence of venality, only is required. A man owes another five pounds—let him be constrained to pay it. A man has stolen five pounds—let him be punished. A man has killed another in order to steal five pounds—let him be punished more severely. This is simple. But to find out whether the man really owes the five pounds or has already paid it; to discover whether he or another stole the money, and committed murder, are questions often difficult to

solve. The individual who is most likely to solve them correctly is the individual who can best arrive at the facts surrounding each case. The only method by which a judge can find out these facts is by examination of witnesses, who themselves are in possession of such facts, with the object of causing them to reveal their knowledge to him.

Certain causes or influences exist which may divert a judge in the progress of his investigations, and may lead him to arrive at a wrong decision. The principal of these are, inability on the part of the judge to compel the witnesses to reveal their knowledge (this may be due to inherent lack of capacity in his character, or to inherent lack of honesty on the part of the witnesses—the result is the same); and misuse on the part of the judge of the information conveyed to him. In the latter case the misuse may be due to the mind of the judge being honestly prejudiced, so that facts already recorded in his brain obscure his understanding the true evidence laid before him; or it may be due to deliberate distortion of true evidence for certain purposes by him, in short, to the existence of venality. These are the main causes of the maladministration of justice wherever it occurs, in Africa as elsewhere.

In England it has been found that in order to secure absence of venality it is necessary to raise the judges above all need or dependence on others for their daily bread, in short to pay them well; and further to secure this object that their appointments once made should no longer depend on action of the Executive. In order to secure absence of honest prejudice, that they should not combine any other with judicial duties. In order to secure the capacity of eliciting true evidence that they should be specially trained for the purpose. I will not here go into the further checks established by the creation of the jury system and the Bar. These measures are admirably suited to the requirements of the community and, taken in conjunction with the existence of a wide-awake, and, through the press, very articulate, public opinion sitting in judgment on the judges, the results are no doubt excellent.

But the conditions in a totally inarticulate native community, without newspapers, under the jurisdiction of an alien judge, are very different from those in England. In the first place the danger of injustice being committed for interested reasons does not, practically speaking, exist. That such a case is without the bounds of possibility I do not say, but for all practical purposes venality may be left out of consideration. An act of injustice when it occurs, and I fear that such occurrences are not very

rare, will be caused either by incapacity on the part of the judge to elicit the facts from a witness (this is the principal cause of all injustice) or from a distortion of facts by mental processes due to prejudice.

The legal training by which the capacity of judges at home is secured is doubtless admirably suited to ensure a proper exercise of their functions among their countrymen. It does not, however, at all follow that that special training will enable them to discharge the same duties among natives. In point of fact, as I shall try to show, such training may be an actual disadvantage to them in the examination of native witnesses.

It will, I think, be admitted that far more important than the special legal training which a judge has undergone are those qualities which are bestowed by a sound general education and by that knowledge of men and affairs which only wide experience added to considerable natural ability can ensure. The completest knowledge of the law conceivable will not enable any individual to administer justice if his capacity for weighing evidence has not been developed by a training with which his legal training is hardly even remotely connected. That general training which any individual who finally becomes a judge in England receives from his earliest days is the result of his daily contact with men and affairs; it is thus that he is brought into touch with those who fall within his jurisdiction and becomes qualified to administer justice among them.

But an extended knowledge and understanding of men and affairs in England does not necessarily imply any great knowledge of the native character or of his affairs. To gain such experience and knowledge as to ensure touch with natives requires time, opportunity, and capacity. Failing these an extensive knowledge of "Law" and even a considerable knowledge of men and affairs in England will not enable the most talented individual to avoid falling into every error imaginable when he is dealing with natives.

Granted that in order to administer justice effectually it is of primary and fundamental importance that a judge should be "in touch" with the natives, let us consider how that experience of life in general which an individual imbibes from his earliest days by contact with his fellows when leading a normal existence amongst his own countrymen at home, is to be secured by an European official living amongst natives.

How does an European get into touch with natives? A great deal has been written regarding the dangers which accrue from lack of touch between the officers of European administra-

tions and the natives whom they govern, but, in my humble opinion, not nearly enough. The extent of the gap which exists between the native and the ordinary official is a fact the magnitude of which it is hard to realise, far more to exaggerate. It is a phenomenon which could hardly be credited by anyone who has not been in a position to observe it personally.

Setting aside the political officers whose lives are, or should be, passed chiefly among natives, the vast majority (there are very few exceptions) of all the other European officials are not remotely in touch with natives. An officer in the Secretariat, Treasury, Customs or Railway departments, for instance, who has spent his whole official career in an African Protectorate may easily, nay very probably, be no more in touch with the natives than is an official of a Government department at home who has never been within thousands of miles of Africa, but who has visited the various shows and pageants in which natives figure in London. Indeed the latter may easily, if he is given to reading books of travel and is naturally interested in natives, be more in touch with native questions than is the official who has spent his eighteen years of service in West Africa. This fact cannot be insisted upon with too much emphasis.

It must be difficult even for the official himself who has spent the best part of his lifetime in a country inhabited by millions of natives to realise that he knows nothing at all, literally nothing at all, about them. Fully to appreciate the marvellous completeness of this aloofness it is, I think, necessary to have worked for many years as a political officer among natives and then to find oneself transferred to work at Headquarters. The extraordinary gap then gradually dawns upon one. I do not wish that it should be inferred that I think that we are to blame for this state of affairs, or indeed that it is avoidable. It is, I think, quite unavoidable. As stated in a previous chapter, I think that what is termed ordinary social intercourse between natives and Europeans is impossible, and indeed inexpedient except in rare cases, so that unless a man's business or his official work brings him into contact with natives there is no blame attaching to him if he is not in touch with them.

The average denizen of the West End of London knows less than nothing about the doings of those in the East End, except that they are on the whole less fortunate than he is. Nobody expects him to ; least of all does he feel himself called upon to make some show of possessing such knowledge. This however, is not the case with the official who has spent his lifetime working in a Colony or Protectorate among natives. He

is very generally considered to know at all events a good deal about the native ; further, it is not always by any means easy to convince him as to the true state of affairs. This is the more natural because, not infrequently, such officers are invited to give their views regarding native affairs at official enquiries, their general capacity or seniority in the service or length of residence in a Colony rendering it reasonable to suppose that they know something worth telling about the inhabitants. But in nine cases out of ten they do not know more than any fairly well-informed person living at home might know.

There is no reason why they should. The life of a departmental officer of the Secretariat, Treasury, or any and all the technical departments, is as follows :—

In the morning he is called and fed by native boys who are nearly always entirely out of touch with their own people. He goes to his work, which is done with pens, ink, and paper, or possibly with various tools ; in the course of this work he may come in contact with a few native clerks in European clothes or with skilled native artisans, a special class entirely out of touch with the natives generally. He is fed at midday and returns to his work. In the evening he takes exercise for the sake of his health with other Europeans. He is fed again and goes to bed. This he does for 365 days and then gets on a steamer and goes home. He spends his leave recruiting his health, occupying his mind on matters as little connected with official duties as possible. This goes on for eighteen years. He retires.

He has never had the smallest opportunity, I will not say of getting into touch with the natives of the country, but even of seeing them. The very natives whom he meets on his way to or from his home and office and the recreation ground are generally not typical natives at all. Once in a blue moon at a railway station or at an official Durbar he may see a gathering of natives assembled to meet a Governor, but he could see almost as much as that in London. It is a point not to be lost sight of that few Europeans working in a native Protectorate are in a position to learn anything about the native population, even though they may spend a lifetime there.

The political officers of course live in close contact with the natives, unless, as I have explained elsewhere, the system of government is such as to cut them off also. Persons engaged in business, especially if they are not so senior in their firms as to be employed entirely on correspondence, are often in very close touch with native affairs ; with a limited horizon of course, but still they often have valuable knowledge. Junior members

of the technical departments which employ large numbers of natives as labourers get a fair knowledge of a limited class of natives; the same may be said of some forestry officers. Apart from these it is to be assumed as a fact, unless the contrary be proven, that an official knows very little indeed about native affairs; that he is, in short, out of touch with the natives.

I have laboured this point in order to make it clear how difficult it is for an official to have that experience and knowledge of native men and affairs which it is essential that a judge should possess to enable him effectually to administer justice among natives. How, I ask, is an official, granted that he possess every other qualification necessary, who is sent from England to an African Protectorate for the special purpose of administering justice, to acquire any considerable experience and knowledge of the natives? His position is that of the majority of officials whose daily routine I have described. It may be said that his work in a court of justice brings him daily into contact with all classes of natives and their affairs. In this respect I admit that he is rather better situated than would be an official of the Secretariat or Treasury. Nevertheless his horizon is very limited, he comes into contact with none but malefactors or litigious persons, and these classes cannot be said to represent the mass of a community, native or European.

Let us imagine the day's work of a judge in an African Protectorate transposing the scene to England. He would be residing in a bungalow situated in a healthy locality, carefully selected as being removed, but at a convenient distance, from some populous centre—say on Hampstead Hill overlooking London. Here he would live having as neighbours only a score or two of other officials employed at the Treasury, Public Works, Custom House, Whitehall or Downing Street. To these his society would be strictly limited. He would read no newspapers. He would daily go to the City and try cases for a certain number of hours. On his way to his work he would see the citizens in the streets but would exchange no speech with them, not knowing their language. At the end of every twelve months he would go on leave and employ himself in a manner which would free his mind as much as possible from all thoughts of his work, say big game shooting in Africa.

Now, can anybody say that a judge so situated in England, from his early youth could by any possible exertion of natural ability acquire the experience and knowledge necessary to enable him effectually to administer justice in England? I think not. How then can he, placed in a similar position in Africa, acquire the

knowledge and experience of natives and their affairs necessary to enable him to perform his duties effectually? It is I hold not possible. It is only the political officers, whose daily work brings them into constant contact with natives and their affairs quite apart from any judicial questions, who are in a position to acquire that experience necessary to enable an official to administer justice among natives.

I maintain, therefore, that the system of Provincial Courts, with political officers as judges, adopted in Nigeria during the two administrations of Sir Frederick Lugard, is not only justifiable but is the only sound system. I admit that in certain centres in West Africa, where there exist large European populations and where the natives are already to a great extent divorced from their normal conditions, it may be necessary to retain a Chief Justice, Puisne Judges and a staff of trained lawyers to assist them; such areas are strictly limited, and the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court should not be extended outside them to include areas inhabited by natives living in normal circumstances.

It may be said that, granting the above arguments to be sound, then the political staff should be recruited only from men who have some legal qualifications, and this leads me to another point to which I have already briefly referred, that is to say the question as to whether the special legal training undergone by men who become judges in England is of any value to men who are to become judges among African natives. I hold strongly that it is not of any use or value, but on the contrary that it may be a drawback. The rules of evidence, to take one example, laid down for observance in British Courts are an assistance towards eliciting the truth where British witnesses are concerned. The native witness, however, differs radically in many ways from the English witness. For instance, a native is generally very accurate in the observance of material facts, but he is on the contrary very careless in his speech. Unless his attention is in some way drawn to the importance of what he is saying he, by habit, talks very much at random. The European is not naturally so observant, he does not use his eyes to such an extent in ordinary life as does the native, but in his speech he is, by habit, far more accurate. He talks less often at random. This fact renders it necessary that radically different methods should be adopted in the examination of native and European witnesses.

In order to get a native to relate a true history of occurrences which he has seen you must keep his attention fixed, your questions must be put in such a way that he realises the point you are

aiming at, otherwise he will answer you at random. To take an example: a brawl has occurred among a party of natives seated in a circle, one draws a knife and strikes another. There is a question as to who drew the knife. One is accused, and it is a factor of great importance on which side of the wounded man he was sitting when the brawl began. If a European witness were under examination he must be asked on which side was So-and-so sitting, in a vague manner. He would very possibly not have observed the fact with so much accuracy as would a native, but in his reply he would, owing to force of habit, speak as accurately as he could. With the native it is quite a different matter. He would probably have in his mind a far clearer picture of the scene than would the European, but unless he realised the importance attaching to his reply he would, owing to habitual carelessness in speech, answer at random to a question thus vaguely put. To get a true statement from the native it would be necessary to ask him: "Was So-and-so sitting on his left?" Put in this manner the native would detect that importance attached to his reply and would recall the mental picture of the scene to his mind and answer correctly. Of course he might deliberately answer incorrectly, but at all events he would give a valuable reply and not speak at random.

In short, in the examination of native witnesses, I think every officer accustomed to examine native witnesses agrees with me in this, you must proceed throughout by putting leading questions. If the witness is deliberately giving misleading answers you will soon detect this and value his evidence accordingly. By putting vague questions you get random statements, which are of no value, either as a record of facts or as an indication of the attitude of the witness. I could multiply instances to show that the rules of procedure adopted in British Courts are of little value, and sometimes are disadvantageous to the proper conduct of a case where native witnesses have to be depended upon.

The essential qualifications for a judge working among natives are sound common sense, a good general education, and a wide experience of native character and affairs. The latter can only be acquired by political officers and, therefore, they, and they only, are fully qualified for this duty.

To turn to the second main group of judges, I mean those natives who are appointed to judge in the Native Courts where native law and custom are administered. These men are placed in conditions quite different from those surrounding the European officers. They are living in normal circumstances among their own people, just as a judge is situated in England. In their

case it is quite right and proper, and highly expedient, that the executive and judicial functions should be separated. In fact, at all events amongst Muslims, they were so separated even before the arrival of the Europeans.

A native judge of intelligence and capacity thoroughly understands how to elicit the truth from native witnesses. No European, however experienced, and even if fully conversant with the native language used, can be for a moment compared to the native in this respect. The native is, therefore, infinitely the better qualified to administer justice to other natives, but for one



A NATIVE ALKALI.

very important factor, I mean venality. It is often stated that by no possible means can this fault be eradicated, the African nature being what it is; and that Native Courts should not be entrusted to try any but unimportant cases.

With this view I do not at all concur. In all countries of the world justice has been bought and sold in the past, but a steady improvement has been secured. The first essential toward this end is the payment of the native judges on a liberal scale. It has been found necessary to do this in Great Britain, so there

is nothing unreasonable in asking for the same treatment of natives. One thing is certain, that so long as they receive but a bare pittance absence of venality will be the exception and not the rule.

The careful selection of the individual native appointed is of course another prime necessity, but this is not as difficult a matter as may at first appear. Amongst very primitive native communities there is a difficulty certainly, and in such cases it is often necessary to combine judicial and executive powers in the hands of the native Chiefs or of the Council of Elders, but amongst the more advanced communities such as the great Filane Emirates or the larger Yoruba Chieftainates suitable men can easily be found.

It has been the policy in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria to permit the Native Courts to deal with the legal work to an increasing extent and with excellent results. I think that, as it is important that the political officers should be in touch with all sides of native life, it would be a mistake, at all events for some time to come, that they should cease from exercising judicial powers altogether; but the vast majority of cases, granted the absence of venality, can be more effectively dealt with in a Native Court than in one presided over by a British official.

Some difficulties occur when the parties to a case are on the one side natives and on the other side Europeans. I see no reason why in the future Native Courts should not become competent to deal with those cases, though at the present time they, no doubt, are not so qualified, and such trials must take place in a Court presided over by a British official.

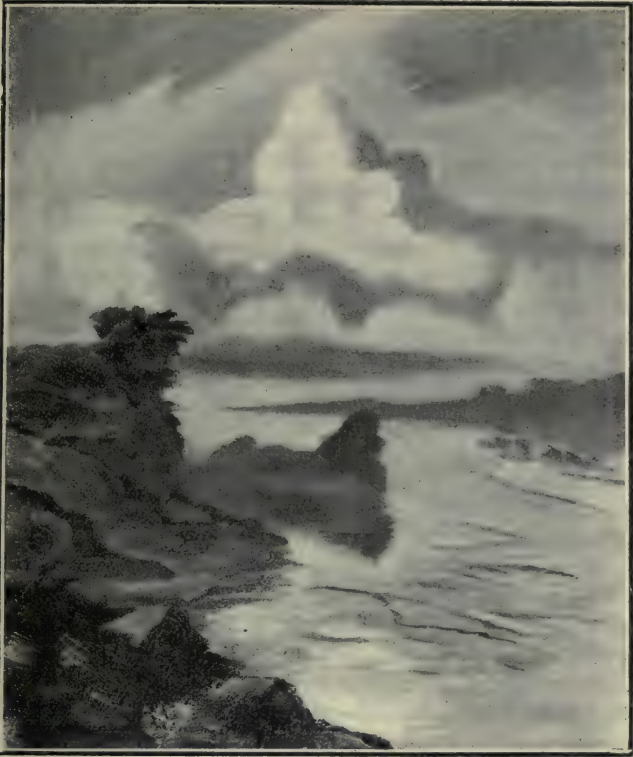
The Native Courts are not at all popular with those sections of the native populace who have come under the influence of Europeans. The reason for this is simple. The malefactor has far more chance of escaping in a British Court than in a Native Court, especially where witnesses for the prosecution or the plaintiff are unsophisticated natives. The sophisticated native is well aware of this. In a British Court everything is against the unsophisticated native, the whole procedure, formalities, the mere fact of being compelled to give his evidence in a standing position and not squatting on the ground, everything tends to confuse him. In this state of mind he frequently loses his head and begins to talk at random, his one object being to get the business over and go away. This is very pronouncedly the case if the presiding judge be not a person of experience and understanding of the native character. The conditions are worst when a Supreme Court Judge is trying a case at some

large Europeanised centre. They are at their best when a political officer is trying the case in some village where a crime has been committed, and where the case may very probably be heard in the open air. But in no circumstances is a native witness in possession of his faculties in a British Court as he is in a Native Court.

In my experience, least maladministration of justice occurs in a Native Court, granted absence of venality, and a good deal less occurs in the Courts presided over by experienced political officers than in those presided over by professional judges.

I would add in conclusion that as yet no judge of the Supreme Court, in any of the West African Protectorates or Colonies, I believe, certainly not in Nigeria, has acquired a native language. The judges are not expected to do so, nor is there any order on the part of the Government that they should do so. Moreover, as the judges are very generally shifted from one Colony to another on promotion, the acquiring of native languages is a difficult matter for them. Political officers, at all events in Nigeria, on the contrary, are called upon to pass examinations in languages as a condition of their promotion. This one fact alone, in my humble opinion, is a sufficient argument, were there not many others, against extending the jurisdiction of the Supreme Courts over unsophisticated natives.





VIEW OF KADUNA RIVER NEAR ZUNGERU.

CHAPTER XI.

PONDERATION.

DIRECT AND INDIRECT TAXATION OF NATIVES.

OF all questions and difficulties which confront the European administrator of Native Races none looms so large as the raising of the means to carry on the administration. Though other questions may be of more fundamental importance none obtrudes itself so forcibly and continually as does that of how to secure financial equilibrium. In the case of nearly all other administrative questions, one may temporise, discuss, or put off taking action until some other more propitious moment ; indeed, many questions of vital importance can be thus shelved until circum-

stances themselves bring about a solution, probably not the best solution, but still the *fait accompli* relieves the Government from the necessity of assuming traceable responsibility in respect to it. In the case of the British it may be said that it has become almost an accepted policy to allow circumstances to wield a controlling force over our destinies, and few if any of the results secured by our national exertions have been due to deliberate planning to reach a far-off goal, but have been rather the outcome of natural forces, rendering such and such action at a given moment obviously necessary and feasible. In view of the limitations of human knowledge, and to the great discrepancies between the results which should accrue from any given action in accordance with the rules of logical deduction when the question is discussed theoretically and the consequences which do accrue from that action in practice, there is much to be said in favour of our national system of "muddling through," even in theory, and the practical results of following such a system are obvious enough.

But the difficulty of raising revenue in the Colonies and Protectorates such as we are considering does not admit of any leaning on fate or circumstance. Every year the inexorable statement of probable receipts and expenditure for the ensuing year has to be faced. The expenditure, necessary and inevitable, grows yearly and has to be met by a corresponding increase in revenue. An increase in the wealth and prosperity of the individuals of a community immediately calls for further development of the means of producing wealth and for the elevation of the standard of the amenities of life.

All this entails expenditure. Revenue to meet this expenditure is raised by means of taxes, which are generally divided into two groups, termed direct and indirect taxes. The term indirect taxation is, I believe, generally used to designate those taxes which are collected on the sea board or on the frontiers of a territory, in other words customs; and the term direct taxation to describe all other taxes. For the purposes of this discussion, for a reason which I think will be evident to the reader presently, I will, however, include under the designation of indirect taxes all those dues which are not paid directly by the individual to the tax gatherer. For instance, caravan tolls (dues exactly resembling customs duties) collected from the merchant owning the caravan at various towns through which he passes, can rightly be described as an indirect tax, as they are not paid by the merchant in the end (any more than are customs duties), but are probably passed on by him to his

customers. Excise duty is passed on in the same way. Export duties collected at the ports of shipment would fall into the same category, though I will not here hazard a guess as to whether they fall on the producer or on the consumer. Income taxes, poll taxes, ground rent, property taxes, etc., on the contrary, are all paid directly by the individual to the tax gatherer and not through any intervening agency, as is the case when an individual purchaser pays a tax in the form of enhanced prices through the agency of a merchant.

Under a system of indirect taxation, even in European countries, few individuals have any clear idea as to how much they pay annually into the State coffers. In fact it is not infrequently a subject of argument as to whether the purchaser pays the whole tax, some arguing that the middleman (*i.e.*, the merchant) bears his share, and some going so far as to say that the producer of the commodities is the person who carries the principal burden. I need not go deeply into this subject here, as in the case of those native communities which are under the system of indirect taxation, none but a very small minority have any idea that they are being taxed at all. They do not connect the rise or fall of the cost of the simple commodities they buy with the Government. In the case of direct taxation, on the contrary, even where the taxation is very small, say, only sixpence per head per annum, each individual native is fully alive to the fact that the Government is divesting him of property. He may or may not resent making the payment, but in no case is the importance of the fact that he does so lost sight of by him. In many cases the political aspect of the tax far transcends its financial aspect. For the payment of a tax, or what is the same thing, the bringing of presents by one individual to another, is in the eyes of a native a recognition on the part of the giver of the superiority of the receiver.

It will be realised that in such circumstances and when dealing with large populations, to be numbered in their millions, it is much easier to raise revenue by employing indirect rather than direct taxation. Indeed, it is a much "safer" method to adopt as carrying no risk of causing a collision between the Government and the natives.

Nevertheless, for reasons which I shall explain, I strongly advocate the collection of direct taxes rather than indirect taxes. Even where sufficient revenue for the needs of the Government can be obtained by means of the latter, I think it expedient to reduce such taxes, and so cheapen commodities, and make up the difference by means of direct taxation; granted, of

course, that the Government is in a position fully to administer the country.

The principal reason why direct taxation is all important to the proper administration of natives is that it is only through this channel that the administrative, *i.e.*, political, officers can be brought into close touch with the natives. As stated in another chapter, the administration of justice and the employment of native labour constitute two other channels for such contact, but they are subject to great limitations: they bring the European official into contact with comparatively few natives, and in connection with affairs which do not enter greatly into the everyday life of the vast majority of natives. A political officer may spend years in a district and yet have but little knowledge of the people where there is no direct taxation. He is not to blame for this; how is he to get to know them unless he has this lever? A native peasant or chief quite understands and does not resent as impertinence (unless he is actively hostile, of which more anon) the closest enquiry into every kind of detail regarding his material life, if the aim and object of these enquiries is understandable and reasonable to him. This *point d'appui* a system of direct taxation supplies in a manner and to an extent which no other government measure can afford. Without the existence of such a *raison d'être* a political officer, whether residing at his headquarters interviewing important chiefs and Emirs, or touring a district interviewing peasants and village heads, is liable to experience some difficulty in finding suitable topics for conversation or means to excite the interest and hold the attention of his listeners. A native chief or peasant is extremely liable to get bored, or even sullen, when asked to reply to a string of questions regarding statistics of population, stock, crops, etc., if he thinks they are prompted by an idle curiosity or the prying nature of a busybody, and is likely after a short time to give the first answer that comes into his head. But when he knows very well that the upshot of all this questioning is to be the assessment of a tax it is quite another affair; he has no tendency to fall asleep, indeed on the contrary he is liable to be almost too wide-awake. To this then attaches the great importance of direct taxation of natives; it brings the native and European into close contact over official business touching almost every side of native life. And though as explained in another chapter I would delegate many of the functions of Government to the natives themselves, yet the duties of assessment should, at all events for a long time, remain I think in the hands of European officials, if for no other reasons than those just

stated. It is the absence of this common meeting ground which causes travellers, traders and even missionaries very generally to fail, even after long residence among them, to know very much about native affairs.

There is a further reason of a political nature which renders the direct taxation of natives in most cases very necessary. I have written that the native regards the payment of a tax, or as he very often calls it a "present," as a symbolic act, quite apart from the valuable consideration of the amount he gives, by which he acknowledges and accepts the enforcement of Authority. A very small proportion of natives on the coast have got beyond this stage, but the vast majority have not. From the fact that a symbolic meaning attaches to the payment of a tax it follows, of course, that it is the last thing a community of natives will do, or permit any of its constituent individuals to do, if there remain any hope that it can successfully resist Authority. To the native mind no submission has been acknowledged or enforced until a tax has been paid.

It is a further logical deduction that the one certain means of lighting a conflagration and of stirring up armed resistance, if any hope of ultimate success remain, is to enforce direct taxation. But experience has shewn, in innumerable cases, that so far from facilitating matters in the long run, a delay in requiring the native to perform this symbolic act has only increased the difficulties in the end, the natives themselves being of course the principal sufferers. A far better spirit is engendered and better relations are established between the white man and the native if open hostilities occur at once, or soon after they first come into contact, than if after a long period of apparently good relations, based on quite mistaken grounds on the part of the



A VILLAGE HEAD.

natives, a conflagration occurs. In the latter case a feeling of resentment is liable to be kindled in the native breast which dies slowly. In order to secure its good effects the symbolic act of tax-paying must be repeated at proper intervals, and this of course implies that the Government is in a position to administer the native effectually. Where it is not in a position to do so it is advisable that the natives be left alone so far as possible, at all events so long as they do not leave their own territories; the ingress of strangers, Europeans and natives, within the boundaries of uncontrolled tribes being prohibited by the Government in order to put no temptation to commit a breach of the peace in the way of the unadministered natives. Punitive expeditions and military excursions of all sorts, whether they result in fighting or not, if undertaken in such uncontrolled districts are worse than useless in my experience unless they result in sufficiently explicit political relations as to eventuate in the payment of a direct tax of some sort on the part of the natives. Failing this, the natives get the impression that the white man is wantonly and for no reasonable object interfering with them.

Direct taxation is, therefore, a valuable, if not the most valuable instrument in the hands of the Government for the establishment of its authority, for acquiring the information necessary to enable the Government to gauge rightly the needs of the natives, and for the education of the political officers. As a means of raising revenue pure and simple it is a method which should not be ignored. Though it is rarely possible to depend only on this form of taxation, and dispense with indirect taxation, it is yet a useful adjunct, allowing the customs dues payable on necessities and objects of real use to be lightened.

The individual native very generally objects to paying taxes and not infrequently displays pertinacity and ingenuity in evading them; in this respect he differs in no way from his European counterpart. It is certainly for the Government to justify the taxes it levies, and an individual is warranted in making legal attempts to escape the incidence of a tax. The newspapers all along the West Coast owned and written by natives draw no little attention to the subject of taxation, and I think that they are quite right to do so. There is much to be said against every indirect tax, except in the case of articles of pure luxury, and the incidence of every direct tax may be taken as a subject of argument. The Press, as the greatest bulwark of individual liberty, if rightly employed, can secure a useful purpose in drawing attention to undue or unequal incidence of direct taxation. Be the arguments brought forward right or wrong, no harm can

result from such discussion in the papers, so long as the general principle is not attacked. Unfortunately, in not a few African journals lately (there are, however, many honourable exceptions), the general principle of the acceptance of direct taxation by the native has been challenged, and writers have tried to stir up popular resistance against their imposition. Such writers have no doubt consciously or subconsciously realised that by paying their taxes at all, apart from the amounts they pay, the natives are manifesting an acceptance of the authority of the Government. By taking up this line I think that the writers are incurring responsibilities of the most onerous, not to say the most invidious, description. To argue that a tax is too heavy or unfair or infeasible may well be to protect the interests of the people ; to argue that the people should refuse to pay direct taxes on principle is simply, as the writers well know, to advise the natives to offer active opposition to the lawful orders of the Government ; in other words to stir up sedition or revolt, enterprises to the successful operation of which the writers could give no assistance, and in the pursuance of which it is highly unlikely that they would risk their own skins. Such inflammatory articles are to be deprecated, not that there is as a rule any great danger that the populace will go so far as to act upon the advice thus given, but because they degrade the institution of the free press from the high position which it should occupy, and limit its usefulness as a valuable means of ventilating genuine grievances and of bringing to the notice of the Government matters of real importance to the well-being of the community.

Direct taxes may be divided broadly into two divisions, which may be termed capitation taxes and proportional taxes. An example of the first, pure and simple, would be the levying of a poll tax of one shilling per head on the population of a district ; as an example of the latter the collection of a tax of 10 per cent. on the income of each individual. But the line is not always clearly defined between these groups of taxes and they often merge into each other according to the mode of their collection and the class of individual who pays them. For instance, if a poll tax of one shilling per head of adult males and females be assessed on the owner of a compound and he is called upon to pay more or less according to the number of his dependants, wives, relations, etc., living with him, then the tax ceases to be a capitation tax pure and simple and partakes of the nature of a proportionate tax ; it hits the wealthier individual harder than the poorer. A tax of a shilling per head of cattle would possess the characteristics of a capitation tax if each individual possessed one head,

but as this is rarely if ever the case, and one individual may possess many and another few or none, this cattle tax assumes the characteristics of a tax proportionate to property; if the tax be levied as one shilling per head of annual increase of cattle then it becomes an income tax. Where each farm is rated at say half-a-crown per annum irrespective of its size that is a capitation tax, but where it is rated at so much per acre or according to its yield that is a proportionate tax. Where each butcher is called upon to pay say five shillings a year that is a capitation tax, where he is taxed more or less according to the number of animals he slaughters that is a proportionate tax. And so on, all direct taxes can be divided up under these two headings: though in some cases they may be said to fall into both categories yet they partake more or less of the nature of one or other of these groups. I mention these details because the political, apart from the financial, value of the collection of direct taxation varies according to the manner in which the taxes are assessed and collected. Such political value increases as the taxes approximate to the tax absolutely proportionate to wealth, *i.e.*, the income tax, and decreases as they approximate to the poll tax or absolute capitation tax. It is unfortunate that just as indirect taxes which have no political value at all are the easiest to collect, so the capitation tax which has the less political value is much easier to collect than are the proportionate taxes which have the greater political value; this in spite of the fact that the capitation taxes, inasmuch as they fall with equal weight on rich or poor might be expected to be less popular. The reason of this is that the native does not like a close inquisition into his affairs any more than does the European.

It is of course necessary to adjust the mode of taxation to the circumstances of the natives to be taxed. These vary immensely in different parts of Africa, and I will content myself here with describing those which occur within the confines of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria with which I am familiar. Here we sometimes find the natives living exactly in those conditions which books on African travel have rendered familiar, that is to say in villages situated at some distance from each other, separated by stretches of bush and each having a clearly marked zone of cultivation round it. Some of these villages may be large enough to merit the description of towns. This is an ideal state of affairs from the point of view of an assessing officer. In the first place he finds in African communities so situated the patriarchal system in full force. The village head and his elders are jointly fully acquainted with all the details of the

affairs of each individual and they generally exert a sharp discipline over the villagers. Here, therefore, his task is easy. Of course he may have to deal with cunning or lying village heads but that is a difficulty that can be surmounted; at all events they have the information required and it is only necessary to make them disgorge it. From them, assisted by personal observation, he rapidly acquires the statistical details required to enable him to gauge how much the village can pay. Moreover the village elders are in a position adequately to assess the tax which each individual can contribute and to collect it from him. It must be understood that it is a general rule, subject to few exceptions, that the European official is not able to deal with the individual African,



THE EMIR OF KANO

but must deal with him through some other African native when it comes to collecting taxes, simply on account of the numerical inferiority of the Europeans. In the case of the village just described there is no necessity to resort to the simple capitation tax. I say this though I am aware that some political officers will not agree with me. By far the best method to tax such a village is for the officer, after ascertaining all the statistics of population, stock, cultivation necessary, to assess the village at a lump sum, to inform the elders and the villagers of that amount and to tell the village head to apportion the contribution

that each villager shall pay so as to make up the full sum. At the same time he lets the villagers know that anyone who thinks he has been over-assessed may appeal to him, warning them that frivolous appeals will probably result in an increase of their assessment. When having done this he rides away, the village head finds himself in a flattering and responsible position, but one full of difficulty. He is, unless he be a man of unusual strength of character, nervous of the unpopularity which he will incur in the process of assessing the individual. This has the valuable political effect of driving him to lean on his council of elders. The upshot of the matter is generally that each patriarch undertakes to raise a proportion of the whole amount payable among those natives who form his quarter of the village. As these are all intimately connected by blood or otherwise with him there is every probability that he will apportion the tax fairly to each head of a family and strictly in accordance with his capacity to pay. In these circumstances, and in such circumstances only, can a true income tax be collected from the natives in Africa; excepting the coast communities where a few natives are living under more or less European conditions.

Those who advocate a poll tax argue as follows: They say that under the "lump sum" assessment just described far too much power is given to the village head and his elders, that extortion and oppression may occur, that it is important that each native should hear from the lips of the European how much he has to pay, and that as it is evident that the diminutive number of European officials which these countries can afford to employ renders it impossible for them to undertake the task of assessing the individual at his proper taxable capacity, the only fair way is to adopt a uniform poll tax right through. To this I would reply that the collection of a uniform poll tax does not give scope for the exertion of any administrative capacity on the part of the village heads, that on the contrary it tends to reduce them to mere mechanical collectors of sixpences, thus stunting their intellects and reducing their powers over and knowledge of the villagers; that the village head to collect a poll tax does not require the aid of the village elders and thus the village organisation is weakened and broken up. In respect to the European assessing officer the result is equally unsatisfactory as the assessment of a poll tax calls for little judgment or knowledge on his part, a mere count of heads only being necessary. Moreover, a relatively important point is that a poll tax can never exceed the amount that the poorest can pay, that is evident. So that although in the first place a poll tax may be the easier

to collect in the long run the revenue which can be thus collected is necessarily restricted to much less than the people can quite well pay. At the same time, the poll tax has a tendency to rise to the extreme amount which the poorest can pay; this amount will certainly be much less than the wealthiest can pay. So that a poll tax imposes the largest burden on the weakest shoulders and produces a smaller revenue than the population can afford. I admit that village heads do sometimes, not so very infrequently, misbehave in spite of the checks indicated, but they are always found out sooner or later and thus the dishonest or incapable village heads are weeded out. It is far better I think to risk the occurrence of occasional hardship to a villager here and there than to adopt a system which must lower the standard of efficiency and capacity of the village heads generally, and further by rendering them independent of the village elders cause the village council which is, properly used, the most efficacious and valuable channel through which we can raise the natives, to become moribund and even obsolete. I need hardly add that the above remarks do not apply to those groups of pagans living in the hills or dense forests over whom we have not, as yet, any great control. In such cases where a tax can be imposed at all it is certainly necessary to employ purely capitation taxes.

Fortunately a large proportion of the African populations, not only in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria but in other parts of Africa also, are living in well-organised village communities such as those described, but not all. In many cases as the populations get denser the "bush" or waste lands disappear. The villagers rendered safer from enemy attack by their numbers leave their congeries and are found living in steadings and scattered all over the face of the country. In such districts as these there will generally be found walled towns often of wide extent (the wall of Kano, for instance, is fourteen miles in circumference) enclosing not only habitations but a considerable acreage of agricultural land. These are the headquarters of chiefs and the centres of commerce; the more wealthy of the farmers keep up town homes within the walls in addition to their farm buildings; and they are resorted to in times of danger from enemy raids by the common folk dwelling without. It will readily be conceived that in these conditions the simple patriarchal system which governs the life of the village becomes modified and complicated. The village itself disappears and becomes rather a parish; the village head (for each of these areas will be found to be under the control of some native) no longer lives in the closest contact

with the villagers, so that he and the village elders no longer have full knowledge of the affairs of each villager, and the control they exert is diminished. In these circumstances administration is in every way more difficult and the assessment of taxes a very different matter. The great Filane Emirs substituted in the place of the village council where that had fallen into decay or to back it up where it still existed as a force, though a weakened force, a complicated system of rule through envoys or delegates residing at the capitals and visiting the villages. Thus a great deal of power over the individual was placed in the hands of other individuals who did not reside in close contact with those over whom they ruled and were not subject to the restraining force of public opinion. Under such a system abuses must spring up. It has been and is still the principal work of the British administrator to recreate the village head and his council as a governing authority and to restore them to their proper place as the base unit of administration.

Towards this end direct taxation is the principal weapon, indeed the only effective weapon, which the Government possesses. It will readily be supposed that the "lump sum" assessment described above does not meet the needs of populations thus circumstanced. The village head and his council do not possess the knowledge necessary to enable them to assess the individual according to his means generally, that is to say to assess an income tax, nor have they the power to enforce the collection of so searching a tax. They must be given a simpler task. It is necessary, therefore, in such cases to depart from the purely proportionate taxes and impose what, even if they are not purely capitation taxes, partake to a certain extent of the nature of such taxes. For instance it may be necessary to empower the village head to collect so much per head of stock, or so much per hut, or so much per plot of tobacco, sugar cane, or other special crops. Or he may be told to collect a percentage of the grain crop (an extremely difficult matter in practice, however), or he may collect a land rent pure and simple based on the size of the farm.

I will not attempt here to describe all the forms which direct taxation may take; they are almost innumerable. In the coast towns, for instance, the rates are similar to those with which we are all too familiar at home. I will, however, strain the patience of the reader by quoting one more instance to show how important a part in the administration generally and in the development of the country direct taxes may play. It is not the least embarrassing feature in the administration of districts where the population

is scattered about over large areas that we frequently find a man living in one district but farming in another. This is very prevalent round Kano, for example. By our system of decentralisation which did away with the host of Emirs' agents emanating from the capitals and over-running the districts we, for a time, created a difficult position. The existing organisation having been destroyed, or at least greatly modified, we depended on the active co-operation of the village heads. These, however, proved to lack the necessary power and authority for the successful discharge of the duties we imposed on them. A village head, or the head of the town, would say, "I will be responsible for the doings of those of the villagers who are farming in my area and



A ROADSIDE MARKET.

who pay taxes to me, but as for the rest (possibly 50% or more) who live here but who do not pay taxes through me (as their farms are situated elsewhere), I have no control over them." In point of fact we found that what they said was true and that a great increase of crime and disorder was traceable to this state of affairs. In order to correct this it was decided that to whatever village head a man paid the taxes on his farm he should also pay a tax on his house through the headman of the village in which he lived. A capitation tax of a small amount on each compound was imposed accordingly, and as it was not desired

to raise the incidence of taxation generally the extra rates on plots of land under intensive cultivation were removed. As a result of this measure the authority of the village heads and their elders was greatly increased and the village organisations were developed and crime decreased very greatly. The compound tax brought in more revenue to the Government, and the relaxation of the extra taxes on certain crops led to a great increase in the production of ground nuts, now the most valuable export from those parts.

I think that this instance proves the value of direct taxation not only as a source of revenue but as an administrative weapon in the hands of the Government for ensuring law and order and the development of the land: and too, the importance which attaches in the native mind to the payment of direct taxes as to the individual to whom they are paid.



CHAPTER XII.

PONDERATION.

MISSIONARIES, EDUCATION AND SLAVERY.

IN a book descriptive in any way of the African coloured native and his affairs the omission of all reference to the great work done by the missionary bodies in what used to be termed the Dark Continent would constitute an unpardonable hiatus. Moreover, in view of the great influence exerted at present, and likely to be exerted in the future, by the large band of devoted and talented men and women drawn from all classes and from all nations of the civilised world, no student of African administration can afford to overlook this important factor, past, present and future, in the development of the native. Before venturing, however, to make remarks in this connection I would say that I am not one who would presume to indicate how religious propaganda among natives should be conducted. I do not propose to try to teach the missionary his job. Indeed I may say that I have a fellow-feeling for him in this respect,

inasmuch as I have experienced, to the fullest extent, the well-intentioned but wholly futile and extremely tiresome efforts of onlookers to give assistance where they are not in full possession of the requisite knowledge. I have observed that just as everybody who appears on the horizon knows exactly how a Province should be administered and is prepared to point out his mistakes to a Resident; just as everybody who has ever occupied a government bungalow is prepared to lecture the Head of the Public Works Department regarding the scientific, hygienic and artistic aspects of building; and just as, of course, the Governor of a Colony being the supreme authority stands to be shot at from every quarter, so there is practically nobody who has ever disembarked on the African shores, except the missionaries, who does not know how and by what means the native should be converted to Christianity. So I expect the missionaries are rather sensitive on this point.

Another reason which causes me to hesitate before going further is the fact that the Government of Northern Nigeria, with which I was long privileged to be connected, has, I fear, earned a rather bad reputation amongst the religious bodies because in respect to a large portion of those territories the establishment of missions was not only not encouraged but prohibited.

Nevertheless it is impossible when discussing administrative problems in Africa to omit taking into consideration the results of missionary labour because those labours are not, cannot be, restricted to instruction in dogma, but must inevitably have an influence, in certain circumstances a very great influence, on the ethical development of the natives from a secular point of view. They establish tendencies in one direction or another and institute a Force, the effect of which is felt throughout the body politic and even at a distance from those points where it is applied. Nor is it to be assumed that the resultant of this force because it is exerted by individuals actuated by the highest and most altruistic motives will necessarily be for the good of the body politic; on the contrary, as I shall try to show, the results produced in the end may be the very results which it was hoped by exertion of this Force to avoid.

I propose to assume that the reader has had the patience to peruse the chapters in which I have discussed "Direct and Indirect Rule" and to assume, at all events for the purposes of argument, that the main points in favour of "Indirect" rule are admitted. Assuming then that the Government is justified in adopting a policy whereby the African races will be encouraged

to develop on lines which are natural to them and on which many have already marched far on the way to civilisation, and that so far as is compatible with giving opportunities for the introduction, at a normal rate, of ideas conceived by other more civilised races, and the employment to a rational degree of the immense resources of science disclosed during the past decades in Europe and America, the African native is to be discouraged from trying rather than urged or compelled, to make himself as much like a European in as short a time as possible, leaping from feudal to modern social conditions in the course of a few short years ; assuming all this what is the position of the Government *vis-a-vis* missionary efforts ?

It will readily be conceived, I think, that it cannot be assumed that in all circumstances the best interests of the native, from the point of view above described, will necessarily be furthered by the influence of missionaries however well intentioned their efforts may be. The missionary, especially the young missionary, may very probably be thoroughly imbued with the value of the "individualistic" system as opposed to the feudal system ; many native customs connected with ceremonial pomp, abasement before a chief, throwing dust on the head as a sign of repentance or apology, and many other observances may well strike him as ridiculous, puerile and even degrading to the natives. This feeling he will impart consciously or subconsciously to the natives with whom he comes into immediate contact. It is true that the same tendency exists in the case of nearly all Europeans whose work calls them to Africa, government officials and private individuals alike. This I fully admit. Indeed, placed in similar circumstances, nine Europeans out of ten would have a much worse influence than the missionary in this very direction. A European trader, or especially a European barrister, planted in the middle of a big native town might have a more disintegrating effect than a mission station. But the Government can control and educate its own officials, and it can segregate the white community, but it cannot educate or segregate the missionary. Though I advocate strongly the segregation of Europeans from the bulk, at all events, of the natives in tropical Africa, yet in the case of the missionary I hold that to do so is altogether illogical and unreasonable. Setting aside the political officers, whose position resembles that of the missionaries, all other



Europeans can carry out their duties without living in close contact with natives ; but a missionary cannot. If he is to live a mile away from any native hut he might as well go home altogether. He must, to do his work at all, live his life among the natives.

In such circumstances I think it may be admitted that among certain sections of African natives in certain stages of development it may behove the Government to consider the feasibility of permitting the establishment of mission stations, and that in some cases the success of the policy adopted might very well be jeopardised, and the interests of the natives sacrificed, should the Government yield to considerations which to those not intimately acquainted with African affairs must carry great, the greatest, weight. In addition to the above we have to consider the feelings of the Muhammadan communities ; nor are the feelings of the various pagan tribes, who are also sometimes deeply attached to their religious rites, ceremonies and places of devotion, to be altogether overlooked. All these, Muslims and pagans alike, deeply resent any active interference with the exercise of their religion, and in some cases give to this expression a wide significance. I do not wish to lay an exaggerated emphasis on this sensitiveness. It can be said with truth that the Muslim has permitted for years past mission stations to be established within such towns as Tripoli and Morocco City, all over Turkey, and I think missionaries have been allowed to visit even Benghazi in pre-Italian days. " So how comes it," it may be asked, " that the Government cannot see its way to permit the establishment of a mission station in such a Muslim centre as Kano for instance " ? Personally, as expressing a private opinion, I do not think that the Muslim population of Kano would raise any objection to such a mission *qua* mission and on religious grounds, so long as the missionaries were white men and so long as they did not preach openly in the streets. A medical mission on the line of the North African missions would probably not raise any protest owing to any fear on the part of the Muhammadans lest many of their creed should be converted. It would, however, give rise to a great deal of protest on purely secular grounds of political expediency. The establishment of a European trading house in Kano would give rise to an exactly similar protest. It was probably, I would even say certainly, grounds of political expediency rather than fears for their religion which caused the Muslim Emirs to refuse permission for the establishment of mission stations before these territories became a portion of the British Empire. The

Emirs did not feel themselves to be in such a strong position as were the Sultans of Morocco and Turkey, or their power over their people so fully established that they could afford to run any risks by permitting the entry of factors of possible discord. They knew, the late Emir of Sokoto, Attahiru, explained this point to me, that each European trader or missionary would collect about him a body of natives, some strangers to the district, some subject to the Emir himself. That whereas in the absence of the European the Emir could quite well control the strange natives, yet once they attached themselves to a European he knew that he would have difficulty in doing so, and that as he lost control over the strangers he would gradually lose control over those of his own subjects who attached themselves to the European; and so administrative difficulties would occur, there would be riots and disturbances, some of the strangers would be killed and this would bring trouble from outside to the Emirate. So he argued. The religious difficulty I never heard him refer to, and I do not think that it bulked largely in his imagination.

Now, in a sense, the British Government is to-day in the same position as were the Emirs formerly, and up to a certain point we are confronted by the same difficulties. The difference is in degree rather than kind. We are not confronted with the danger of war on our frontiers as a result of mismanagement of internal affairs, but we are threatened with grave danger of administrative difficulties, with the appearance of discontent and restlessness, resulting in poverty, chaos and even active disturbances, if we allow the authority of the native administrations to become ineffective. Even should the evil consequences, for some time at all events, not be of such a description as to be noticeable to the casual observer and therefore not such as to attract public attention, the best we can hope for is a kind of national decay, a crumbling away of the character and individuality of the native, a loss of pride, self-respect and interest in life generally. He will cease to be, though primitive, robust mentally and physically, and will become a kind of nondescript colourless entity aping in a lackadaisical and futile manner the appearance and shibboleths of the Europeans, all the time knowing in his heart that he is not and can never become one of them. From this condition the step to decadence is short. Such is the future which we can easily prepare for the native by divorcing him from his inherited instincts, customs and natural surroundings. Nor have we any reason to suppose, in fact the evidence all points in the opposite direction, that well-meaning but misapplied efforts on the part of the missionary are any less con-

ducive to such deplorable results than are well-intentioned but ill-considered measures taken by the Government. Any and every influence, I contend, which outrages the pride of race should be opposed by the Government in the interests of the governing as well as of the governed races.

"But," it may be said, "thus arguing on these lines you should debar the missionary from living among the pagan natives as well as Muhammadans, for, if religion is not the stumbling block but the fear of upsetting the tribal organisation, then the arguments apply to all kinds and conditions of natives."

This is true, but methods of government not having been as yet reduced to the rules of an exact science it is not expedient in every case to push an argument to its full logical conclusions. The Government of Northern Nigeria has always assisted and fostered missionary enterprise among the pagan tribes, especially the more primitive of these tribes. Here the disadvantages indicated above are not so liable to occur, at all events not at present. The primitive pagan is a very robust fellow, mentally as well as physically, especially when he is not removed from his companions. There is little or no danger of his losing his characteristics readily or of his trying to ape the white man. The primitive instinct is strong within him and makes him cling to his tribe, to his environment, to his hereditary customs; it requires nothing short of the full weight of the Government machinery to create a decadent condition in the case of such robust constitutions as these. So that so long as the community is a primitive one there is no reason to suppose that the influence of the missionary will not secure those good results towards the attainment of which it is always exerted.

But let such a pagan community once emerge from the primitive stage and the same difficulties will appear, the same tendency towards disintegration will arise. Instances have already occurred where pagan chiefs have complained that the



tribal organisation is being undermined, and other instances where the tendency to decay and decadence is plainly visible ; though I must confess that in almost every case the Government also must share a part of the responsibility. I venture to prophesy that if the policy of preserving the native institutions gains ground the missionary bodies will find that the Government will be forced, reluctantly enough but in the best interests of the natives, to restrict the sphere of their activities to an increasing extent, at all events for a time. There are phases in the development of each community which call for different State measures. Once the native administration of a group has become fully efficient and the pride of race has developed to a sufficient extent then the mental robustness of the primitive native, weakened in the process of development, will be recovered. In a fully developed native state the danger of disintegration would not occur, and the field could again be thrown open to missionary labour with the certitude that nothing but good would result.

There is one means by which the missionary bodies could compass their ends to-day without awaiting these necessarily slow developments, and without running the risk, with or without sanction of the Government, of doing more harm than good. If it were recognised by them that before he can become a good Christian a native must become a good citizen, and that to enable him to become a good citizen he must acquire pride of race, patriotism and discipline, and that he can acquire these things only by our securing to him opportunities for development on his own racial and tribal lines and not on our, to him foreign and unnatural, lines of development, and the missionary bodies thus become a bulwark in place of a danger to the native administrations, then the whole position would be altered. We should have Muslim Emirs, pagan chiefs and Residents inviting their co-operation, even clamouring for the establishment of mission stations in their districts, instead of dreading these as they very generally do now. I need hardly add that to bring about this very welcome state of affairs it would be necessary for every missionary to inculcate in all his pupils and every kind of native over whom he exerted an influence that ready and willing compliance with all the lawful orders of his Emir or chiefs and observance of all sanctioned tribal customs and manners is their first duty, and to place such secular instruction in the forefront of his teaching.

In the preceding remarks I am referring in all cases to missionary labour among natives who have not become Europeanised. They do not apply to work among Europeanised

natives. In this direction there lies an immense field, and, I am sorry to say, an increasing field, which is not only open to but urgently calls for ministers of religion. Here I hold that every possible facility, encouragement and (giving of course a strictly personal and private opinion) pecuniary assistance should be given by Government for the conduct of religious propaganda of the most active description. It is the one, about the only, thing we can do for these natives. Even in respect to the Muhammadan states I do not hold with some who have argued that the presence of Christian minister in the Government stations and other places where there are a number of Europeanised natives would cause suspicion on the part of the Muslims,



A NATIVE FAMILY

or be regarded by them as the insertion of the thin edge of a wedge to result ultimately in a breach of our pledge to them not to interfere with the free exercise of their religion. Either my experience has led me entirely astray or I can say with truth that the contrary results would occur, and that the fact that Christian ministers of religion were to be found wherever there was any considerable number of Europeans would, so far from engendering suspicion, increase the respect in which the Muslim holds us. Every Muhammadan of any education knows the injunctions of the Koran regarding "the people of the book" and that the Messiah was recognised by the founder of Islam. Such respectable Muslims are far more liable to be shocked,

and their suspicions roused, by an absence of the observances of the Christian religion by Christians than by the fact that Christian ministers are to be found in their country.

When considering the work of the missionary in Africa one naturally turns also to education, a field in which he has expended so much labour and with such great results. Though in some cases the work is now taken over by Government departments in the main, yet the foundations were laid by missionary pioneers in every case, and all over tropical Africa their labours are exerted with great effect. Between the Government and the missionary schools young Africans able to read and write are being turned out by thousands annually. The position of an out-and-out supporter of "Indirect" rule and of the preservation of native systems of social order and government is not an easy one *vis-a-vis* this immense work done and in the doing. The policy which I have outlined certainly does not admit of the institution of schools where young natives are to be taught to read and write English, and, as a natural corollary, European habits and customs. Nothing could be more subservient of the policy than this. What then is to be said regarding this great work of education already in full swing? Were the whole of Africa a *tabula rasa*, as were the Northern Provinces of Nigeria a few years ago, and we could put back the hands of the clock some eighty years, it would be a different matter. I admit to the presumption of holding the view that in respect to education—literary education on European lines I mean—we have put the cart before the horse. In a native community well established on native lines of development, with a native administration willing and capable of doing its work well, there would, as I have already said respecting mission stations, be nothing to fear and everything to gain from schools where knowledge from the outside world would be imparted to the more intelligent and enterprising of the native youth. They would be in a position to turn such knowledge to good effect, without falling into the pitfall of losing touch with their own people. By beginning at the other end of the natural order of social development we have certainly not failed to impart some useful knowledge to a number of natives (though as I shall try to show, it is we ourselves who are reaping the harvest of that knowledge), but we have, at the same time, spread wide the net at their feet. Practically every young native who has passed through a school (I shall explain presently why it is hoped that the schools in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria will prove exceptional) is divorced from his own people. It can be taken for

granted that, in the mass, he will never again revert to the normal native line of advance. Setting aside those whose parents can afford to send them to England to continue their studies, what future lies before these youths? There is one future only before the vast majority—they will become clerks in Government offices or clerks in merchant houses. A very few of extra intelligence will blossom into shopkeepers, petty traders, agents, and fill other such positions in or about European trade centres.

But it may be said "What is there against this? Why should they not become clerks or do retail trade alongside of European houses? Clerks are often well paid, and besides, how would our Government offices and our merchants be able to get on without a supply of clerks?" We have come to the crux of the whole question. How should we get on without our native clerks? It is a fact that they are a very important wheel in the social machinery we have erected, and I admit frankly, though with regret, that it is too late to turn back now. Destiny decreed that we should during some generations, with the best intentions in the world, in the case of large populations, divert them from the lines on which they might have progressed normally and introduced them to a social system which is natural to us but unnatural to them. In so doing we have greatly benefited, up to the present, and shall benefit for some, though a limited, space of time. Have we benefited the native? We certainly meant to do so, but I am compelled to say that in my humble opinion we have not; on the contrary, we have put him into a very difficult position, which we in due time shall share, and from which we shall find it difficult to extricate him and ourselves. Nevertheless, we cannot undo the past; the Europeanised native is there in great numbers, and he has now come to fill a place in the social system of a certain number of the inhabitants, white and coloured, of Tropical Africa, a number very small compared to the mass of the natives yet appreciable. To give some idea of these proportions I would add that the population of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria is about ten millions, of which none but a few hundreds have become in any sense denationalised. Of the population of the Southern Provinces (nine millions) I do not suppose that more than one million have been seriously affected, probably much less. The population of Sierra Leone is about one and a quarter million, that of the Gold Coast about one and a half million, that of the Uganda about three millions, that of East Africa four millions, that of Nyassaland about one million, making about eleven millions in all. Say that, at a liberal computation, one-sixth of these

natives have come so much under European influences as to be "denationalised," this makes under three millions, out of some thirty millions, thus affected; nevertheless it is a considerable body of men and not one which can be radically influenced easily or in a short time. In such circumstances I am not so bold, or presumptuous, as to suggest that we should close existing schools. The difficulties of bringing back these natives into the fold of normal native evolution by re-establishing native administrations are already so great that the educational system established makes only one more in any case. Moreover, the needs of commerce and government already created must be met. But I hotly oppose the extension of the system of European education to the great majority of natives who are still untouched, who I hold can, without dislocation or damage to anybody, be encouraged and assisted to develop on lines natural to them to become valuable members of the Empire.

We have already affected and denationalised a population fully large enough to supply the clerical requirements we have created without any need to extend the sphere of action. In fact if we are not careful we shall create a plethora of applicants for such work which will cause difficulties to arise in Tropical Africa similar to those experienced elsewhere.

Granted that a radical change in the orientation of our policy were to be adopted and that we undertook the task systematically of re-establishing the native administrations in places where they have been abolished, I think that the schools even might be turned to account to secure this end. Just as if the missionary bodies should become supporters of the native administrations they could operate to good effect in communities untouched by European influences, so the schools, though working in a less favourable atmosphere, might by inculcating the right ideas assist in recreating the native family and re-establishing the authority of the parent, and so assist in bringing back the native to a social system suited to him; at all events to a certain degree.

In the Northern Provinces of Nigeria there were before our advent, and there are still, a very large number of Muhammadan schools under purely native management, for girls as well as boys. There is no reason why in course of time such institutions as these should not be extended under our guidance in such a way as to supply the needs of the whole population, and of all denominations. The Government Education Department is in its infancy and the number of schools and pupils is very small. They are for the most part sons of

notables. In these schools no attempt was made up to three years ago to impart a knowledge of the three R.'s with a view to fitting the pupils for clerical posts. It was attempted rather to impart general knowledge of men and things, to train the characters of the pupils and generally to fit them for the important duties which they would be called upon to carry out in the native administrations when they grew up. In the case of Muslim pupils an Arabic education was added to enable them to study the Koran and the commentaries thereon. Education on these lines still continues, but I regret to say that classes have been formed recently with the avowed object of training pupils to become clerks. This I need hardly say appears to me to be directly opposed to the system of Indirect Rule through native administrations and the policy of assisting the native to develop on his own lines, which has been so successfully pursued for the last fifteen years, and which it is not proposed, in any quarter, to abandon. The native of the Northern Provinces does not take too readily to clerical duties in Government or merchants' offices, and I sincerely hope that these classes will not be found to be much attended. The danger of contamination is not in my opinion very great ; at the same time, for the Government to adopt in one department a policy which directly opposes the policy which constitutes the base and foundation of the form of administration which has been deliberately decided upon is to my mind an extraordinary move, to say the least of it.



From missionaries and education the mind naturally turns to slavery, a field where the missions have laboured so greatly and to such good purpose. This institution we generally connect with Tropical Africa because the robust constitution of the African enabled him to support the conditions of a slave to a remarkable extent, even when those conditions were at their worst, and when he was transported to lands where the climate differed very greatly from that of his own. This physical stamina, which was the principal cause why the African became the slave *par excellence*, is a point not to be lost sight of when we are considering the probable future of the African coloured races ; the fact that members of the race have been able not only to exist but also to propagate and increase in the most adverse conditions possible is an indication of what it may be capable of doing under favourable conditions. His marked superiority over other aborigines, such as those of America

and Australia for instance, as regards physical stamina is a noteworthy feature of the tropical African native.

The fact that the African remained a slave long after other natives had ceased to support this imposition should not blind our eyes to the fact that all nations have at one time or another tolerated the institution of chattel slavery, both as slaves and possessors of slaves, in the past. They have not only tolerated that, to us detestable, institution, but it was during a period of years, the extent of which is so great that we are not able to gauge it with any kind of accuracy, and in comparison with which the time which has elapsed since the general abandonment of the principle by civilised nations is as a drop in the ocean, one of the principal bases, if not the main pillar, on which the fabric of society rested and which enabled progress to be secured. The importance of the institution of slavery by means of which leisure from manual labour, without which no intellectual progress is possible, was secured to certain classes of the community, is described in the clearest manner by Walter Bagehot in "Physics and Politics," a chapter well worthy of study by the student of African affairs. The strong and capable few have succeeded in transferring the burden on to the shoulders of the weaker and less capable many during the past few hundred years by other means than the employment of the institution of chattel slavery. That the means now employed to secure this end are infinitely preferable in every way and are far less degrading to the mind and less harmful to the body is undeniable; and that this, the great step in progress which the civilisation of Western Europe can claim to have made, is perhaps one of the greatest ever made towards securing the wellbeing of man on this planet is a fact of which we have every reason to be proud. It is, nevertheless, undeniably true that we have still far to go before we can boast that we have secured that leisure which is necessary to progress to so much as a large percentage of the human race. The immense strides which we have made in another direction, that is the utilisation of the forces of nature in such a manner as to relieve man from the curse of Adam, have not so far brought leisure to every man's door to the extent to which their importance and visible results might have led us to hope. It is evident that we still cling to institutions which a future generation will regard as having been valuable in their time, but as being contrary to reason and humanity, just as we to-day regard the institution of chattel slavery.

Between the point from which the European views slavery and that from which the vast majority of Africans view

that institution there is a great gulf. But it is not so great in extent as we might suppose, judging from the horror with which we to-day are liable to regard an individual who possesses a slave. The extent of the gulf is about one thousand years at the widest, and a much smaller space of time at the lowest. To show how much our ideas may change as regards what it is proper and expedient to do, a good instance is to be found in the actions of our forefathers in respect to the colonisation in the first instance of Sierra Leone. That colonisation originated in the fact that a large number of freed African slaves were found wandering about in England without means of support. These slaves had been imported by their masters from the West Indies, and claiming their freedom on arrival at these shores had been freed by order of the Courts, or rather the masters had not been able to make good their claims to these slaves in the Courts. In order to relieve the situation ground was acquired from a native chief at Sierra Leone and these Africans were shipped off. Together with them was shipped a large number of white women, "unfortunates," whose loose morals and profligate ways had made them a nuisance also. Now this to our views incomprehensible act was performed little more than a hundred years ago and by our immediate ancestors, whom we very generally respect and to whose training, labours and prowess in the field we owe our national existence to-day, and of whom it behoves us not to speak slightly. It follows, I think, that we may very easily commit a solecism if we pass a moral judgment on an African who does not take quite the same view of slavery to-day as we do, however determined we may be to extirpate slavery and to pass legal sentence on those who break our laws regarding it.

It is true that a large number of Africans, possibly a majority, rejoice at the abolition of slavery, but that is because they lived as slaves or were afraid of entering that condition. But this does not mean that they abhor slavery as an institution, only that they dislike being slaves; should there appear any chance of owning slaves it would be a very different matter. Long-fellow's chieftain, who as captive far from his home dreamed that he was galloping panoplied for war along the bank of the Niger certainly would have assumed the possession of a number of slaves as necessary to his enjoyment of freedom.

The instinct to sell his fellow man is so strong that it may quite truly be said (even in jest) that if three freed slaves were sent together up-country in Africa and they arrived at a place where they could do so with impunity, two would set on the third

and enslave him and sell him on the first opportunity. It is certainly extremely hard to stamp out the practice; African natives of wealth and position will run the greatest risks and treat the slaves purchased with the greatest kindness, giving them every sort of *largesse* to secure their fidelity, rather than forego such transactions. A fiery old pagan chief belonging to a primitive tribe of cannibals which had been raided for slaves from time immemorial, and possessed but few slaves itself, evinced the greatest fury when I informed him that our law did not permit the capture of people and their sale as slaves. His tribe had just suffered a defeat at the hands of our troops and he had to come in to arrange terms of surrender. My remark, intended to gain his confidence and to please, was as it turned out, misplaced. Another pagan chief, also of a tribe decimated and driven to the heights of rocky and inhospitable hills before the advent of the white man, but now able to cultivate the valleys, remarked that the white man had rendered life unbearable in his village by putting down the slave trade. "Before your arrival," he said, "we had no lazy, immoral young men amongst us, as we always sold anybody who misbehaved more than once. Now we cannot do so, and each is a law unto himself."

One thing is certain, that is so sure as you touch a custom which has prevailed for generations in a community, no matter how contrary to reason it may be, you will cause hardship, and difficulties of a most unexpected description will face you. Nevertheless, I would not have the reader suppose that anything I may have said in defence of native laws and customs is to be construed into a defence of the institution of slavery. No one who has travelled in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria can fail to be impressed with the devastation to which it has given rise. In some districts round the fringes of some of the greatest Emirates, between them and the independent pagan centres, are to be found zones extending for miles, sometimes a hundred miles in width and more in length where the ruins of large walled towns and the traces of long-abandoned cultivation are eloquent of the damage which has been done; of whole populations wiped out, not once, but time after time, all to provide the African currency, slaves. It may be argued that the tribes were always at war and that they would have thus destroyed each other even had there been no such thing as slavery. This I do not think can be said with truth, however, for no other booty of sufficient value to stimulate the conqueror to



make such efforts was to be got from these poor people. Had their bodies not possessed value, none would have risked his life to take from them such property in goats, sheep and corn as they had. The institution of slavery has been the principal cause that Africa is not much more densely populated than it is to-day. But it is a mistake commonly made to suppose that the coloured African suffered more from outside than from within in this respect, and that he was always the victim of such races as the Arab and the Filane. No doubt he did suffer from them greatly in recent years, because they were the stronger at the moment, but had they not been there, some purely African tribe would have gained the ascendancy, and the result would have been the same. To trade in slaves is, at the bottom of his heart, the one ideal of the African. It is a curious sight to observe the face of a better-class native, say, a Kano merchant who formerly traded in slaves, watching a number of native pagans working, as they do for us in thousands, on the railway. His eyes glitter as he seems to be gauging the points of each and calculating what the lot would fetch! One of the chief reasons which has led to the Muslim nations falling to the rear in the struggle for existence has doubtless been their not having been able to shake loose from the institution of chattel slavery.

Though I yield to none in detestation of the institution of slavery in whatever form it makes its appearance, and there are other forms than that of chattel slavery which are worth considering, yet, as I have said above, interference with deep-rooted custom is always productive of hardship, even to those whom it is desired to protect, and it behoves us to act warily in order to cause, at all events, the least hardship to the fewest number possible when introducing even the most obvious and necessary reforms. Slavery makes its appearance, as I have said, under various guises, and that form which we term chattel slavery is not by any means limited to the plantation slavery described in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Some of these forms we can and should stamp out with all speed and severity at our command. The capture of slaves obviously falls into this class, and all transfer of slaves on payment of valuable consideration we should deal with in a similar manner. By so doing we damage nobody and only benefit those we desire to protect. But when this has been put into effect there remains the great population of "domestic slaves" who have occupied what may be called a servile position, but which is really no worse and no better



than that of an European who has no money and is not well educated. Many have been in this state since they were children, many were born to this state; what are we to do with these people? Are we, in our anxiety to clear our consciences of the burden of slavery, to urge these people to leave the houses of their patrons? If so, what is to happen to them?

The question of the future of the female "domestic slave" who has left her household is a particularly difficult one. It may be said that they should be put into freed slaves' homes and properly looked after. To begin with there are hundreds of thousands of them. Who is to look after such vast congeries of young African women and girls?

Moreover, supposing that they find it dull and prefer to become *filles du regiment*, how are you going to prevent them from doing so without putting yourself, in their eyes, in the exact position of their former masters and mistresses? Nobody who has had opportunities of studying the difficulties of a freed slaves' home, male or female, will accuse me of overstating the case when I say that there are a thousand and one difficulties in the way of the Government or any European institution taking over direct responsibilities on a large scale in connection with the African domestic slave. I say without hesitancy that they are far better off as they are in their households, and that we should be well advised to turn our efforts



rather to keeping them there than in encouraging them to claim their freedom. If the native law and custom, which invariably, I think, certainly in every case which I have studied personally, extends great protection to those of this class, and punishes masters for abuse of authority or cruelty, is enforced, we need not legislate ourselves in a direction where we might lay ourselves open to the invidious charge of legalising slavery, and at the same time fail to effect our object.

A failure on our part to save the social fabric from disruption in this direction will certainly lead to a weakening of the authority

of the head of the household, that is to say a failure to secure family discipline, which is the foundation of the well-being of an African community. It must be remembered that when we assumed direction of the affairs of these people we took over a machinery of Government already working. It may have been rudimentary, it may not have been very good, but still we took over a machine of some sort as a going concern. We have and shall have for some time the advantage of the momentum already acquired during many generations to help us. The mistakes which we make to-day may very probably not be apparent at the moment, or for some time; the machine goes on with its own momentum. But we shall know about them later, and very certainly if we, in our enthusiasm to forward the work of abolishing slavery, act injudiciously and in such a manner as to threaten the existence of the patriarchal system, by which family discipline is ensured in Africa, under the specious plea that it is "nothing but another name for slavery," then we shall suffer for it as a nation in due course; moreover, our good intentions will have the result of causing incalculable harm to yet unborn generations of Africans.

To show the relations which may exist (I lay stress on the word may) between a "domestic slave" and his master, I would add an extract *ipsissima verba* from a report rendered by the Resident of a Province in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria quite recently: "A 'domestic slave,' a man of mature years, went to his master and said he desired to purchase his freedom. The master did not agree to this, but said he would free him without accepting any money. The slave objected. The parties then came to the Assistant District Officer. The master stated that he wished to free his 'slave' but that the latter refused to be freed. The 'slave' explained that his master had been 'his father and his mother' and that he would not rob him by accepting his freedom. Both were equally firm. Eventually the Assistant District Officer, with the help of the Alkali (Judge of the Native Court), managed to effect a compromise by which the 'slave' paid his ransom money into Court. The Alkali offered the money to the master, who refused it. The 'slave' in his turn refused to take the money back. Both master and 'slave' then agreed that the best thing to do would be to pay the money into Court as 'Court fees.' Owing to this happy arrangement the master freed his 'slave' without accepting his money, while the 'slave' had the satisfaction of feeling that he had not robbed his master. The 'slave' insisted on a clear understanding that he was to live with and work for his master as he had done all his life, and

was 'not to be driven away.' He further pointed out that his object in asking to purchase his freedom in the first place was to make some small pecuniary return to his master for all his kindness."



DOMESTIC "SLAVES" REPAIRING A WALL AT KANO.



APPROACHING ILORIN CITY.

CHAPTER XIII.

POCHADE.

A MASS OF POTTERY.

AN African tropical Protectorate is invariably a "Potty" place. By this I mean that the officials are all Pots—Big Pots, Small Pots, vessels brazen or earthen. It may be said that the same remarks would apply to officials in every country in every age. That is no doubt true, but the circumstances in a Dependency inhabited by some millions of natives and a few hundreds of Europeans are such as to accentuate this "Pottiness."

Among all nations a certain proportion of individuals are born Pots—some big, some small, yet their characters are cast in the mould of the Pot. It is true that such individuals generally find their way to the haven where nature meant them to rest—the Government services; but not always. They are to be

found in all ranks of society bowing to those senior and bullying those junior to them, anxious that their own status in society should be clearly recognised, especially by those less fortunate than themselves. Trying people generally, and inclined to fuss over trifles and to make mountains out of molehills, their most tiresome trick is an indulgence in the mental equivalent of the bodily movements of an elephant picking up needles. Skill in delivering pin-pricks and power to endure the same without any loss of temper or dignity is a further and necessary qualification of the true Pot. On the contrary all Government servants are not necessarily born Pots. It is true that they are expected to exhibit the qualities of a Pot, at all events between office hours, but they need not always be potty. In many cases officials show great dexterity in assuming and doffing their pothood at will, and at all times wearing it unobtrusively. Some begin very well but as they get older their natures become less elastic. The bulk which they size in the eyes of their fellowmen, the scrutiny to which they are subjected, all these things tend to crystallize the pot shape of their characters and to render it more difficult and irksome to throw it off. Many such an one may have wished that as in the Arabian Nights some fairy would say to him, "If Allah made thee a Pot remain a Pot, but if thy work hath compelled thee to assume this guise throw it off and return to the form in which Allah created thee."

All West African officials are not born Pots. None are born Big Pots, though some in the course of time achieve that dignity. But they nearly all assume the pot shape very early and their pothood is liable to become permanent, part and parcel of themselves. This is not their fault altogether. An official in England may very probably spend a great deal of his time with people who are not and have no intention of ever becoming Pots, big or small, and these do not, as a rule, encourage their companions to wear their uniforms more than is really necessary, be it figuratively or materially. The West African official is less fortunately circumstanced. In the first place, except when he is on leave, he spends all his time in the society of other Pots. For in these places traders and merchants often become "Members of Council" or enjoy some sort of official position which gives them the right to become Pots of not inconsiderable dimensions in the eyes of the world. Moreover, those officials, such as the Political Staff, who are in administrative charge of large blocks of natives, and are consequently the cynosure of hundreds of curious eyes, must wear their pothood conspicuously and continuously. They must be careful to let

its size and substantiality be clear to the natives, otherwise they and the Government they represent will lose prestige; and the world will suffer. All these circumstances tend to crystallize the character in Pot form.

Even in the case of officials who are not in charge of natives their very servants conspire to force the mould upon them. Much has been said against the African "boy." There is no doubt that he adds to the "white man's burden." In point of fact the African is not at his best in domestic service. As a carrier or a soldier or engaged in any work which entails plenty change of scene and excitement the African in European employ is at his best. Domestic "boys" are at their best when "on tour" with their masters. The hardships they will endure, the resource they will show in preparing a camp and meals at the end of a hot march under the African sun, followed by a tornado just as the day closes, in packing up, supplying early tea, etc., after sleeping all night in the rain or under very scant shelter, is marvellous. Moreover in times of danger there is no record, I believe, of one of their class showing the white feather. But in times of peace and plenty they are a trial. They have not the faculty which we African officials have read of, but have never experienced, possessed by the Indian servants of performing routine duties with pleasure and precision; they are too full of vitality. Nothing can be more trying than to see a boy spending months and years carrying out routine duties with an inexactitude which becomes almost mathematical. In short, they require movement, excitement, "life," or they become bored. Thus it is that the African boy "co-operates not ineffectually with the climate and the mosquito in the curtailment of European life in West Africa."



"WHAFFOR YOU GO PASS ME? DEN MY
MASTA BIG PASS YOUR MASTA!"

His influence is, however, not limited to the physical condition of his master's body. He re-acts also on his master's mind and

character. To whatever extent the African domestic may lose the characteristic virtues of the members of the tribe in which he was nurtured, there is one trait which he never relinquishes. The love of display, pomp and ceremony is never diminished. He likes to play the "Big Man." Now it is a settled convention amongst the boys that they should take the rank of their masters. The servants of a Governor will always take the "pas" of all other officials' boys; so on right down the official hierarchy. When there is doubt about the table of official precedence the boys will not infrequently settle it by the use of force, armed or unarmed, if necessary. Only in one instance have I known this rule of etiquette departed from. It was in the case of the "doki" boys, as the grooms are termed. It so happened that a horse of quite superlative excellence fell into the hands of an official of a low grade, so low a grade indeed that it was ignored by the official list of precedence, and in order to discover where to place the holder at table it was necessary to add up his salary and allowances. Nevertheless so splendid was his steed, so beautiful to look upon, and so invincible on the racecourse that his groom (when mounted of course) used invariably to take "pas" of all other horseboys. Yes, even the Governor's* horseboys mounted on the Governor's horses were content to ride behind him.

Of course no man, no European at all events, could thus capture the imagination of the native; so the invariable rule is the bigger the official "Pot" the bigger man his servant. From this it follows that there is a competition amongst the boys to get into the employ of the greater Pots.

Moreover, the servants are more favourably circumstanced in the selection of their masters than are the masters in the selection of their servants. Almost any servant can easily get a master, but there have been known cases where a master could not get any servant to work for him. It is customary in West Africa for masters to give their servants characters in writing at the end of their tours. Such characters if good have a fair transfer value, if bad of course they are quickly done away with, so that to judge from written documents all the servants in West Africa are of superlative excellence. The boys themselves, however, do things more systematically and thoroughly. The

* We had not a Governor-General in Nigeria in those days, but I am fully confident that, even if we had had one—so great is the prestige of the perfect steed in the eyes of the natives—the grace, beauty and strength of this horse would have held their own successfully against the renown and administrative qualities of the head of the Government.

European official on his way home does not as a rule spend much of his time discussing the qualities of his servants with his brother officials. But his servants, on the contrary, no sooner is he on board, lose no time in thoroughly analysing his character in conversation with their fellows. They weigh him up, balance his good and bad qualities, and pass judgment accordingly. Nevertheless much is forgiven in the case of a really important military or civil Pot. No doubt the boys realise that the cares and worries of official duties account for a good deal, and that allowance must be made. Moreover, his high rank, raising as it does his *entourage*, compensates for many annoyances. So it comes about that the larger the Pot the easier it is for him to secure good servants and thus his life may be prolonged.



BOYS DISCUSSING THEIR MASTERS.

It will be seen that in West Africa a man must always be contriving to achieve the impossible. He must even render himself a hero in the eyes of his *valet de chambre*. He must ruffle it among the best and make his weight felt, or both his work and his comfort may be prejudiced. This is not always as easy to do as might appear. At Headquarters, the home of the bigger Pots, and where quite large Pots are common enough, matters regulate themselves easily enough without severe collisions. It is when a fairly large Pot accustomed to consort with great Pots at Headquarters wanders away from the fold and goes up country that there is liable to be trouble. For, accustomed

to float in company with the greatest and best, he is liable to rate his pothood somewhat above its real rank ; he may conceive himself to be both brass-hatted and copper-bottomed for instance, whereas in point of fact he may be only one of these things. Leaving the Headquarters' fold he does not expect to meet in the course of his meanderings with vessels of larger or even of equal dimensions with himself. Yet up country, vessels with a great deal of brass in their compositions are, if rare, still to be met with ; some are even brass-hatted. Should these two meet a tussle for supremacy may occur ; between their boys and retainers it will certainly occur.

In the same way a pretty important Pot, say a first-class Resident from the Provinces, who bulks, and rightly bulks, as



A BOY HEARING ADVERSE REPORT ON HIS NEW MASTER.

by far the largest Pot anywhere in his neighbourhood, may float into Headquarters. Here he bumps up against not only the biggest and brass-hatted, copper-lined-throughout vessels to whom of course he pays due respect, but also he drifts into close contiguity with Pots of all sizes, some like himself pretty big, some much smaller. He knows quite well how he stands, but sometimes the rest do not, or deliberately pretend they do not. Hence bruises occur.

It is all very well to say that we should be above such trifles ; unfortunately in this imperfect world the true worth of the modest is not always taken at its right, that is to say their own, valuation. An official who is working amongst natives and

who allows himself to be downtrodden will not command the respect and the obedience of natives. Moreover his comfort, as explained, will suffer, and his health depreciate, and the devil in the shape of a diminutive pension will be his final reward. Every official is, therefore, bound to try to get out of the earthenware crust into a brass hat at least, if he is to put his talent to the best use and enjoy moderate comfort in his old age. True it is that at home there are Pots so huge and so brazen from the first that they are not troubled by these worries, but such are not to be found floating with the whale and kraken round the Bight of Benin. For the largest, brightest, brass-hatted, copper-lined, biggest of Crown Colony Pots—what are they in home waters? How small they look when taken down from their pedestals. No more does the clang of their gongs cause all the earthen vessels in their vicinity to quake. The brazen throat emits a feeble note like to the tinkling of a cymbal.



CHAPTER XIV.

PARTHIAN ARROWS.

“A PETTY passion for contemptible details characterised him from his youth, and, as long as he lived, he could neither learn to generalise, nor understand that one man, however
WRITING, diligent, could not be minutely acquainted with
WRITING, all the public and private affairs of fifty millions
WRITING. of other men. He was a glutton for work. He
was born to write dispatches, and to scrawl comments upon those which he received. He often remained at the council board four or five hours at a time, and he lived in his cabinet.”
. “He spoke no tongue but Spanish, and was sufficiently sparing of that, but he was indefatigable with his pen. He hated to converse, but he could write a letter eighteen pages long, when his correspondent was in the next room, and when the subject was, perhaps, one which a man of talent could have settled with six words of his tongue. The world, in his opinion, was to move upon protocols and apostilles. Events had no

right to be born throughout his dominions without a preparatory course of his obstetrical pedantry. He could never learn that the earth would not rest on its axis while he wrote a programme of how it was to turn. He was slow in deciding, slower in communicating his decisions. He was prolix with his pen, not from affluence, but from paucity of ideas. He took refuge in a cloud of words, sometimes to conceal his meaning, oftener to conceal his absence of any meaning, thus mystifying not only others but himself."

It is evident from this description, which is to be found in Motley's "Rise and Fall of the Dutch Republic" that Philip II. of Spain possessed a number of very disagreeable "anti-social" characteristics. To liken a brother official to that monarch would certainly be actionable; and indeed probably an exaggeration, as such a combination of detestable traits is, we may safely assume, very rare. At the same time splinters of that beam we may sometimes find even in our own eyes. The rage, it may rightly be termed a "furor," for writing is not rare, else had this book, for instance, not been written. There is some excuse for this in official life in West Africa, especially in the case of administrative officers, because it is an undeniable fact that a Resident's work is judged very much by his own account of it. Just as that nation is the happiest which has the least interesting history so that Province is the best administered concerning which there is least to write about. But unless the official in charge can explain this, at great length in an interesting manner, time after time, how is it to be realised that he is doing good work? So a capacity for writing good reports and dispatches must be acquired if an official is to secure scope for his activities and endowments. The habit of writing, which is said not to be really very difficult to learn, is certainly difficult to throw off, and is liable to restrict the usefulness of an official who has climbed to a position where his energies were better employed in doing things rather than discussing actions at great length on paper, both before and after performance.

On the whole an official need not fear the pricks of conscience as long as he is addressing his superiors, for they can generally

protect themselves: though it is true that he may have to support pin-pricks, or stabs, should he go too far. It is rather when addressing screeds to juniors, who are at his mercy, that an official should remember how sharp the stings of remorse can be. For the juniors must not only read what he writes but try to fathom what he means also; and more, they are very generally compelled to furnish a coherent and quite understandable reply. Moreover, it is hard to bring a senior official to book for any damage he may thus work to the brains and intelligences of his juniors. Who is to know whether he is abusing pens, ink and paper and wearing down his own health and that of his staff to the detriment of all executive capacity? The juniors are far too loyal to complain, and generally, by making extraordinary efforts, succeed in pulling their chief out of the quagmire, or the inkstand, in the nick of time.

Though a senior is not very vulnerable to the correspondence of his juniors as a rule, and the pen is not a very dangerous weapon when used by one of his staff against his chief, yet there are exceptions. A Governor, for instance, is open to attack from this side. It is true that he can both read and answer most of his correspondence by deputy, but he can rarely avoid seeing the actual materials used in that correspondence. Being responsible for the finances of the Colony it is naturally a grief to him to see a great expenditure of paper and ink, implying also as it must wear and tear to the typing machines: especially if he feels he could put all this material to better use himself.

The typing machine, combined with the terrible skill and velocity with which these engines of destruction are handled to-day, and the wicked invention of shorthand, will probably be found in future ages to be the cause of a complete absence of all records of our times. The patience of a Prescott has sufficed to enable the Spanish archives to be laid open to us in such a manner that we can follow the journeys and campaigns which resulted in the conquests of Mexico and Peru down to the smallest details, many of which must have appeared trivial at the time but which are of the greatest interest to us to-day. But then neither Cortez nor Pizarro had shorthand

writers or typing machines. They were compelled to report facts briefly, as the dispatches had to be written out in a fair long hand: it is even said, incredible as it may appear to us to-day, that no copies were kept. It is quite possible that, had they possessed typewriters (being so ill-supplied in other respects), they would have been so worried with correspondence that they would never have conquered the new world at all. Who knows? And what super-Prescott of the future will ever have the patience to go through our colossal archives?

If an officer is under the hallucination—and it is a frame of mind which is commoner than might be supposed—that because he is pushing a stylographic pen across a page of cream-laid foolscap he is necessarily serving any useful purpose, and “doing his bit,” then the safest person for him to write to is another of equal station with himself. If the Resident of one important Province spend a day writing, with the help of a thesaurus, a well-turned elaborately composed communication to the Resident of an equally important Province, or the Head of a great Department address a long screed to the Head of another equally great Department, neither need lie awake at night thinking of his brother official burning the midnight oil trying to make out what he is driving at. Both may sleep soundly knowing that “howks dinna pick out howk’s een,” and that as the world gets older the more people are inclined to write but the less they are inclined to read.



THE Arabian prophet Muhammad is said to have himself repudiated all claim to possessing the power of performing miracles, saying that the production of the Koran was sufficient proof of his divine inspiration.

THE
PUSHFUL It is recorded by Washington Irving in his
SECRETARY. book "Mahomet and his Successors" that

"one of the proscribed was Abdullah Ibn Saad, a young Koreishite, distinguished for wit and humour, as well as for warlike accomplishments. As he held the pen of a ready writer, Mahomet had employed him to reduce the revelations of the Koran to writing. In so doing he had often altered and amended the text, nay, it was discovered that, through carelessness or design, he had occasionally falsified it, and rendered it absurd. He had even made his alterations and amendments matter of scoff and jest among his companions, observing that if the Koran proved Mahomet to be a prophet, he himself must be half a prophet. His interpolations being detected, he had fled from the wrath of the prophet and returned to Mecca, where he relapsed into idolatry."

All Secretariat officers will be glad (I used to be one myself so I know they will be glad) to hear that Abdullah nevertheless was subsequently re-admitted into the fold of the faithful, and was even made Governor of Egypt during the Kalifate of Omar.
Verb. sap.



To an official whose life and energies are to be devoted to work among natives three qualifications are necessary ; the first of these is a knowledge of native languages ;
 NATIVE the second a knowledge of native languages ;
 LANGUAGES. the third something else which is quite different.

I will not bore the reader by explaining exactly what this third qualification is ; suffice to say that it is far more important than any linguistic accomplishment. I put native languages in the first place because it is almost impossible to acquire the "something else" except through that channel. Nevertheless the impossible is sometimes, though very rarely, achieved, and in one out of about five hundred cases it happens that a really efficient political officer cannot, or thinks he cannot, acquire any appreciable knowledge of any native language.

The importance of a knowledge of native languages, or at least of one, is fully realised in India and Egypt, in fact everywhere except in Tropical Africa, and nobody in those parts expects employment, far less promotion, in the political branch without possessing such knowledge. In West Africa it is often urged that the number of different languages spoken by the natives is an important factor to be considered. A man cannot be expected to acquire three or four languages even ; and if having acquired one he should happen to be moved to a different district that knowledge will be of no further use to him. But are not a number of different languages spoken in India, for instance ?—and yet the acquirement of native languages is insisted upon. It is true that in Nigeria it is probable that about two hundred different languages and dialects are spoken. But it is also a fact that with a knowledge of Hausa you will be able to converse with about six million natives, who speak that language in addition to others ; and if you know Yoruba you will be able to get on with some four million. These groups are large enough to warrant the officials acquiring these languages, and when they have acquired them to warrant their being employed in districts where they can use their knowledge. I do not like to dogmatise in respect to natives which I have not had the opportunity to study personally, yet I find it hard to believe that some *lingua franca* is not to be found in every Protectorate which

is spoken by a sufficient number of natives to render its acquirement not only justifiable but imperative on the part of the officers of the administrative branch.

I have said that efficient political officers unacquainted with any native language are, though rarely, to be met with. Nevertheless I should strongly discourage a young officer who feels he cannot acquire any native language, or who fails after making the attempt to do so, to stick to the political branch. "You have mistaken your vocation, dear boy. No doubt your natural genius and qualifications will carry you to the forefront of the *élite* of any walk in life you may choose to grace; at the same time you will go further and climb more rapidly should you devote yourself to other work," would be sound advice in such a case. For it is, if not impossible at all events unlikely, that if he possesses a natural sympathy with natives and their affairs he should be content through a life-time to hear about their likes, dislikes, needs and complaints at second hand through the medium of an interpreter whose knowledge of English is contained in the limited vocabulary of that not very euphonious, nay even at times ridiculous, vernacular known by the Chinese description "pidgin English." This even assuming that honest, I do not say intelligent, interpreters were the rule and not the exception: but of this more anon.

I do not wish to recommend that it should be made compulsory that any officer should acquire a "scholarly" knowledge of native languages or that he should be compelled to go in for "high proficiency examinations" set by examiners who are themselves "highly proficient" and who are anxious to show off their knowledge. A good working knowledge of the language is all that is wanted for practical purposes so that an officer can at all events follow the native sufficiently to be able to check the interpreter when he makes a gross blunder; and to address a few remarks to the native himself in his own language, so that he may gain his confidence, and the native may realise that what he is saying does reach the white man and that his one resource is not the ubiquitous interpreter, or "tarprinta," to use the latter's own description of himself. More than this is not absolutely required and should not be attempted by those who cannot

pick up languages easily. But so much knowledge of at least one *lingua franca* should be demanded of every political officer ; not before he receives any promotion but before he is placed on the permanent staff at all.

It is true that even in the Northern Provinces of Nigeria, where the learning of native languages is, I am glad to say, very strongly insisted upon, an officer possessing a knowledge of Hausa (which is one of the most widely spoken of the African native tongues) may easily find himself the centre of a group of villagers who do not understand that language. But it is extremely improbable that he will not be able to find some man of that village who does understand enough Hausa to interpret. Even if he cannot find a man of that village it is easier for him to find some native who understands the language spoken in that village and Hausa as well, than to find anybody who understands that language and even the most elementary " pidgin " English. So that an officer if he knows Hausa is at all events likely to be independent of his own " English " speaking interpreter, instead of being his " domestic slave " ; he will at all events have a choice of interpreters, and be able to use first one and then another, so that the villagers may see that he is capable of exerting his free-will in some respects, and is not entirely at the beck and call of one " tarprinta."

As for the colossal impudence which a well-established interpreter with a kind " Boss " can develop, I need not dilate on that phenomenon here : it is world wide and well known. But a point sometimes overlooked in West Africa is the fact that " pidgin English " is a language, that has to be acquired. It is not " broken " English. It is no use saying to an interpreter " Tell the natives they can ' make ' their ' lerigion ' " ; if he understands that he would probably understand you if you said " Tell the natives they may worship as they please." But if you wish to be certain of not being misunderstood you must say, " Tell these people they fit to make them God-palaver so they please." Quite apart from any bad motive an interpreter may, with the best intentions, make the most hopeless hash of a conversation. For instance, on my first arrival in Northern Nigeria I was supplied by Government with a quite reasonably

well-intentioned honest interpreter. He had learned his "English," however, from a Scotsman. Now that Scotsman had, it appears, been in the habit of conveying the emphatic negative by using the expression "cannot" abbreviated to can't, only he pronounced the "a" short, thus "kant." "Tell him he kant do it" was what he used to say in place of the usual pidgin English "Tell him he no fit to do it." To convey his gracious permission on the contrary he used the correct "pidgin" term "Tell him he fit to do it." Newly arrived from England, and ignorant of the "pidgin" idioms, I used to convey permission by using the ordinary term, "Tell him he can do it." The interpreter failing to detect the omission of the final "t" always, I discovered about six months later, mistook my "can" for the Scotsman's "kant." The administration of the Province was somewhat complicated by this slight difference. To take another case, a very important official indeed once said to the interpreter "Momadu, tell the Emir he must go to his house now as I am very busy with the estimates." The Emir happened to be of a somewhat avaricious disposition and his face was wreathed with a smile full of understanding and fellow-feeling when the interpreter said in the vernacular, "The white man elephant* says you must go home now as he is going to count his money."



* Very important officials, native or British, are habitually termed "Elephant" or "Lion" by the Hausa people.

"ONE man one roof" is the principle lately approved by the Colonial office for adoption in the designs of the civil officers' residential quarters at the new Government Station situated at Kaduna in the Northern Province of Nigeria. Before this, to my mind advisable, decision was arrived at there had been a good deal of discussion on the subject. Though all junior officers were unanimous in thinking that a man working in a climate trying to the nerves and temper does need some corner where he can secure peace and quiet occasionally if he is to be able to do his work to the best of his ability, and that if he is "doubled up," or "trebled up" (as not infrequently occurs), his work will suffer, yet certain senior officers, who of course could not be "doubled up," were of a contrary opinion. I have heard one, and he was in a position to "pull the strings" too, to say that he so strongly disapproved this "craving for solitude" on the part of young men; that he would advocate the erection of large buildings to accommodate six or seven juniors (that is to say men aged from twenty-five to thirty or more), and one rather senior *who would be in charge of the rest*. It is a fact that this view is held by quite a number of "men that count," and it is the exception rather than the rule for junior officers not to be "doubled up." I could understand it being argued that exigencies, lack of funds or space, for instance, necessitated such an arrangement and that the officers must make the best of it. But to advocate it as an ideal appears to me extraordinary. Has anybody ever heard of senior officers adopting it? Does one anywhere find the Governor, the Chief Justice and the Commandant living together? Is there anywhere recorded a protest on the part of any of these very senioiest of officials against having to endure the solitude of separate quarters?

I have even heard it said that junior officials if they live alone are likely to take to secret drinking: as if by the time a man has got on so far as to drink secretly he were not going to drink in company too. In fact by the time a man has reached that stage it is far better that he should drink "secretly," and not be inducing others to follow him cocktail for cocktail. In my experience "secret drinking" is so rare an accomplishment that it is a phenomenon that may be left out of consideration for practical purposes. There is on the contrary far more likelihood for a young man to get into the habit of taking what is for him rather too much alcoholic stimulant if he finds himself boxed up with a crowd of other young men, including perhaps some older and stronger heads than his own; especially in places

where there is not much except "shop" to talk about after the evening's exercise, tennis, polo or whatever it is, is over and before the tocsin dinner-bell has sounded. It is in such circumstances as these that the pre-prandial whisky-and-soda is as liable to be "doubled up," and men are liable to get enthusiastic over their grievances. If he were in his own bungalow the young man would probably, on most evenings at all events, amuse himself quietly with a book, or and, perhaps one small whisky-and-soda; at all events there is no excuse for him if he does not. But this is just what he cannot do if he is living with a crowd in a house possessed of such admirable acoustic qualities that he can hear his next door neighbour wash his teeth. It is true that sometimes two officers may be found whose natures are attuned in such perfect harmony that they always want to be doing the same thing at the same time: but such Damons and Pythias are the exception and not the rule. In any case even if each has a separate roof they can manage to so arrange mutual visits as to see a very great deal of each other, quite enough for all ordinary purposes at all events. They can "mess" together for the sake of economy, for instance. What is more likely to happen is that a man fond of music will be quartered with another fond of literature. So that whereas the one loves to listen to Caruso and Tetrizzini, with their throats full of the sands of the Sahara, singing through a gramophone with a worn pin, the other likes to compose articles for *Blackwood's Magazine*. In such a case of course the noisier artist will hold the boards unless the latter in revenge takes to keeping a dog that also enjoys music and adds his voice to the concert.

All the advantages of "society" which can be adduced in favour of the "doubling up" system can be enjoyed by men living in separate houses, seeing that all have legs and can visit each other; so why not let each have his own roof? It cannot hurt him and in nine cases out of ten in my experience the fact that he can, when he feels so inclined, enjoy rest and quiet will be very patent in the quality of his work next day. There are only two contrary arguments to be adduced which will "cut ice" at all. One is the question of space, the other of expense.

With regard to the first; the question of space can always be got over except in the rarest instances. The "sunlit spaces" of Africa are not yet so crowded as all that. With regard to cost, it is true that the cost is slightly greater. It costs, to be meticulously accurate, about £80 per head more to build "one man" bungalows than to build "two man" bungalows. In addition, owing to the extra space covered by a number of small bungalows compared to that covered by one large building.

the cost of upkeep of roads and sanitation is slightly increased. But in my opinion, it were far better to reduce some other head of expenditure (if such a course is considered absolutely necessary) than to secure so diminutive a saving at the cost of the comfort, *i.e.*, the health, of even one Government officer, though he be of the most junior grade conceivable.

There is yet another point. Nobody has ever, as yet, been so bold as to suggest the "doubling up" of married couples. It is important from every point of view that it should be possible for officials to bring out their wives, if the latter are fit to stand the climate. It is particularly important that junior officials should be able to do so, as not only are they more often married than the seniors, but they can less well meet the expense of keeping up two establishments, one at home and one in Africa. It very often happens that the wives have to stay at home because quarters are not available owing to the "doubling up" system. On the contrary senior officials always have separate bungalows; thus "unto him that hath shall be given and from him that hath not shall be taken even that which he hath."



BORNU PIPERS.

THE rates charged on the railways have a very appreciable effect on the development of a new country. In some parts of the world—I believe it is the case in Canada, where GOVERNMENT the Railway Companies are also large land- RAILWAY owners—the rates are often cut down so as RATES. barely to cover the cost of working (sometimes goods are even carried at a loss), the Companies

looking to the development of their estates for their profits rather than to the earnings of the railways themselves. This appears to me to be an extremely sound policy even for a private firm, but more especially for a Government railway. The country through which it runs may be regarded as the estate of the Government, from which a revenue can be obtained by direct taxation. As the country is developed this revenue increases, and it is a sounder policy for the Government to depend on that as a source of income rather than on railway receipts. If the railways are looked upon as a great source of revenue there is a tendency to increase the rates and thus to strangle the development of the country, and thereby to establish a vicious circle. It is the vogue for the General Manager of a Colonial Railway to point to the total of cash receipts as a proof of successful administration. It appears to me that is a wrong criterion. The quantity of goods carried and the cost of their transport are the only crucial tests. The cash receipts may be inflated by charging rates so high that railway transport is hardly cheaper and therefore hardly more advantageous to the country than are the more primitive modes of conveyance. Looking at the question from a point which embraces all the interests of the Government, *i.e.*, of the country, it may even be said that the smaller the cash receipts, so long as they balance the expenses, the better.

There is yet another consideration which partakes of the nature of politics. It is invariably the case that a technical Department which earns a lot of money tries, and generally succeeds, in spending more money than one which does not. In theory such a thing is of course out of the question; nevertheless it is of daily occurrence in practice. Some part of a large revenue finds its way back in a refreshing shower, not of salaries to officials, but of better quarters and certain privileges to the officers of that Department; this to the great mortification of the officers of other less fortunate Departments. Even from this very domestic point of view it appears to me that it would be better to keep down railway rates and depend for revenue on money raised by means of taxes which are not collected by technical Departments.

I may add that nobody (official at all events) agrees with me in this and that colonial railways in my experience are always run with the idea of securing the largest possible balance of receipts over expenditure.

THE END.



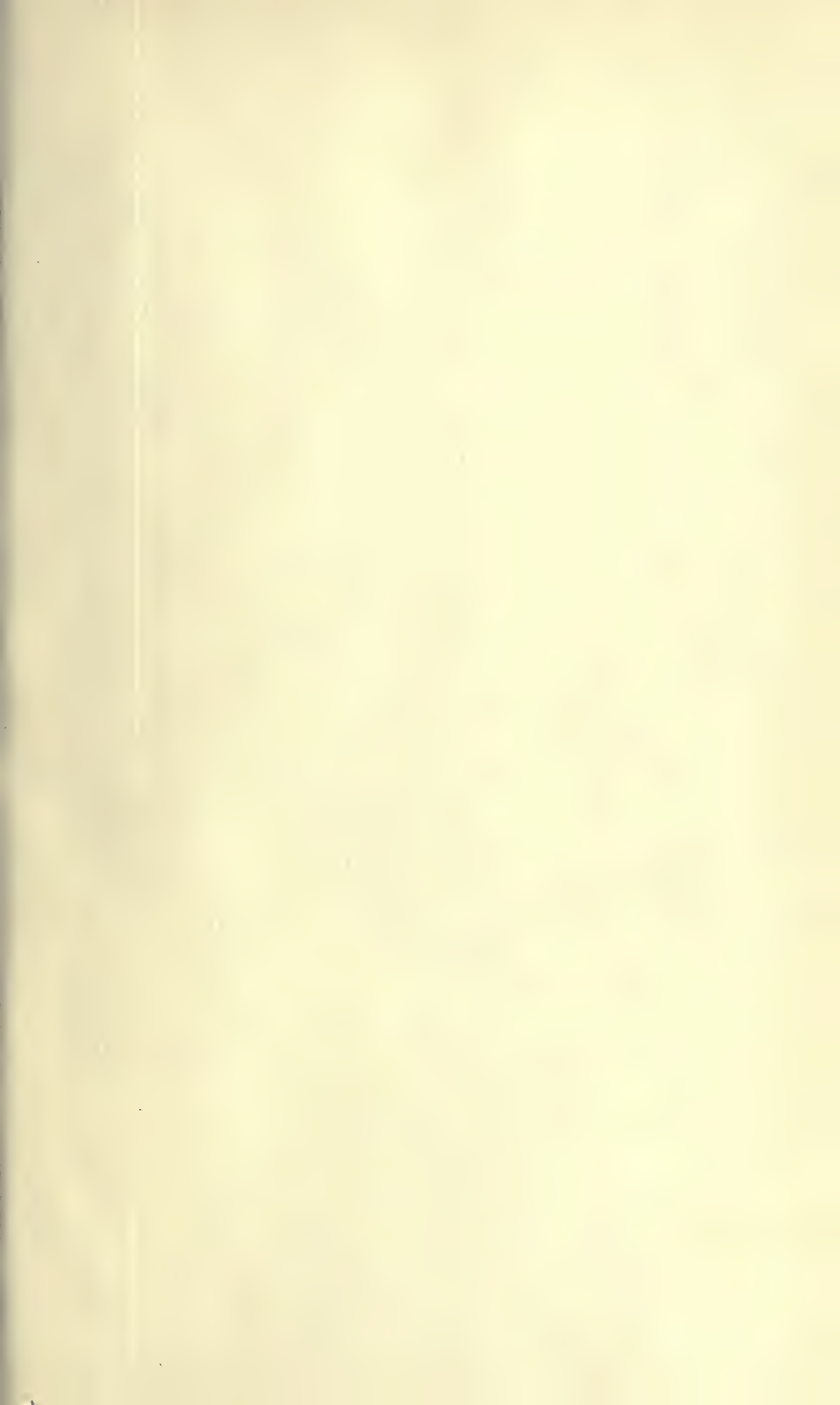
"IYAKA." *

"SAI BULALA." *



"NA TUBA." **

* These are Hausa expressions.





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Native races and their
rulers

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